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**The Manifestation of National Identities  
in Late Eighteenth-Century Scottish Art c1750-1800**

by

**Deborah Jane Graham**

VOL I

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
of Doctor of Philosophy in the History of Art**

**University of Warwick, Department of Art History**

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### **Declaration**

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not previously been submitted for a degree at another university.

### **Abstract**

This dissertation seeks to explore how national identities were manifest in eighteenth-century Scottish art. Understanding national identity to be a cultural and political phenomena, it considers symbols of national identity and examines in aesthetic and economic terms how the fine arts were both implicated in, and capable of expressing, the significant changes in national identity apparent in Scotland following the 'Forty-Five.

The first chapter concerns itself with the issue of art and identity in Scotland between c1750 and 1800, and surveys the relevant literature, before introducing other significant issues pertinent to this research: the Enlightenment and Improvement. Chapter two recognises that previous studies of Highland portraits have examined them from an 'external' perspective. It investigates the implications of this for the viewer, and proceeds to analyse them from an 'internal' perspective intended to reveal the sitters' motivations, to conclude that they are aristocratic images of authority, and its loss. The construction of the myth of the Highlands is thus expounded visually.

If these symbols offer little evidence for an identity in flux, it is questionable whether individuals' portraits can express national identity. Yet such a claim, it will be argued in chapter three, can be made through the desire to collect and order portraits by nation, and its relation to the Enlightenment discourse of the role of the individual in forming civil society. In this context, in chapter four, the aesthetic qualities of Allan Ramsay's 1753-4 portraits will be argued as having been of particular significance to their Scottish sitters, being formed by Ramsay's participation in Enlightenment Edinburgh society. Evidence for this position will be adduced through his paintings and writings, though the influence of physical setting is also considered.

Finally, in chapter five, a study of Edinburgh art markets in comparison with those of English provincial cities addresses the question of whether Scotland was a nation, or province of England. The synthesis of existing literature and an original survey of art-related newspaper advertising reveals the Edinburgh market to be distinctive, though increasingly reliant upon London. The co-existence of local and national culture is found to be an important dialectic in the market, just as the dialectic between Scottish and British culture was found to be so generally in this dissertation. In conclusion, chapter six argues that while Scottish art must be considered as part of the history of British art, the desire amongst Scots to be part of a British nation was a significant force in shaping Scottish visual culture.



### Abbreviations

DNB	Dictionary of National Biography
EC	Exhibition Catalogue
EPL	Edinburgh Public Library
EUL	Edinburgh University Library
NGS	National Gallery of Scotland
NLS	National Library of Scotland
NTS	National Trust for Scotland
RCAHMS	Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments, Scotland
SNPG	Scottish National Portrait Gallery
SRO	Scottish Record Office

## Chapter One

### Scotland: Art and Identity c1750-1800.

In 1707 the Act of Union created in name, if not immediately in spirit, the nation state of Britain. The Scottish parliament was dissolved and for almost three hundred years Westminster became the seat of Scottish political power. Without doubt this political process had wide reaching consequences, particularly with regard to the Scottish nation's identity. For while the concept of national identity during the eighteenth century is generally, as Linda Colley and others have demonstrated, complex, its manifestation in Scotland at this time was further problematised by the Act.<sup>1</sup> The questions, ambiguities and complexities of national identity in Scotland have not diminished over the centuries of British Union, but remain prominent for today's population. Further, at an international level, theories of national identity and nationalism have become urgent topics of debate due, in part, to the upsurge in nationalist movements following the fall of state socialism, and a rise of ethnically based national consciousness.<sup>2</sup>

The re-establishment of a Scottish parliament on 1 July 1999, following an overwhelming vote in favour of devolution in September 1997, served to demonstrate that despite almost three hundred years of a British parliament and nation, the majority of the Scottish people wanted their affairs to be decided in Scotland, and not at Westminster, that they wanted a Scottish national rather than British response to

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<sup>1</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons. Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, London, 1994. For the issue of national identity in the eighteenth century in general, see the major writers on national identity given below.

<sup>2</sup> There are many books dealing with the subject of national identity, the major writers in English on this subject are Ernest Gellner and Anthony D. Smith. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, Revised Edition, London, 1991, 1996 reprint; Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, 1983; E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge, 1992 and Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, London, 1991.

politics.<sup>3</sup> Scots perceived that differences in ideology and identity between Scotland and England were still important, despite three hundred years of unification, and no British identity has superseded or displaced Scottishness within the national conscience.

It is reasonable, therefore, to raise questions about the history of the British nation and the Scots place within it, as pertinent in the eighteenth century in the light of Union as they are today in the light of devolution. In the early eighteenth century membership or citizenship of a nation involved active participation within the realms of diplomacy, politics, or the military. The dominant discourse of civic humanism thus defined membership or citizenry by power or authority. This became problematic for the majority of Scots simply because the seat of power and its sphere of influence became distanced from them. An alternative definition of membership was thus required, and this was, arguably, supplied by the social theories of the Scottish Enlightenment.<sup>4</sup> We need to ask who were the Scots and what was Britishness and how the two might be accommodated. This will bear particularly on the expression of these new and changing identities in cultural terms.

Literature, poetry and the writing of national histories are familiar means through which Scottish national identity was reiterated during the eighteenth century, but in an age when observation was central to explaining the world we might expect the visual arts to have been as significant. My aim, therefore, will be to gain a greater understanding of the nature of art production and its reception in Scotland in the latter half of the century, and more particularly to understand how art was affected by one of the most important theoretical and practical questions of the day, that of identity, hence to consider both the

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<sup>3</sup> 60.4% of the population voted at the referendum on 11 September 1997, 74.3% supported the principle of the creation of a Scottish parliament.

<sup>4</sup> Parliament was distanced both by the restricted number of Scottish peers given a seat in parliament (see below) and the physical and temporal distance between London and Scotland at this date.

national identities of the people of Scotland, and how to some extent they were perceived by others. This will be achieved by considering Scotland both as a nation and a province of an Anglo-centric British society.

This project might be expected to focus on the expression of national identity through the subject matter, perhaps related to circumstances of commission and display; or through iconography in terms of didactic function as part of the politics of national identity or nationalism. These are valid and important means of exploring the relationship between art and national identity and will be utilized to some extent in this dissertation. However, such methods are ultimately concerned with the politics of national identity, and tend to ignore its cultural construction. They place art outside the culture of a nation, regarding it primarily as the political instrument of authoritative bodies, or those that seek to oppose them.

This way of looking is appropriate, as art was and is often used for political ends by exploiting 'national' symbols and imagery, to promote particular ideas of the nation state, its import and values, wealth, rulers and enemies.<sup>5</sup> Didactic art that serves the political identification of the nation provides (often consciously and with motive) the criteria for national self definition and location. However, this form of art is hierarchical, it imposes most often from above, a means of self-definition within the collective identity of nationhood.

But national identity is cultural as well as political, and the pictorial can also express the shared histories and myths of a nation.<sup>6</sup> Landscape paintings, by representing a particular terrain with associated histories can express the cultural basis of

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<sup>5</sup> Venice provides a good example, as a city state that relied upon the sea as the basis of its wealth and power, it invoked images of the sea in both ceremony and civic art, promoting adherence to and identification with the state amongst the members of the ruling patriciate. To the visitor these images and symbols were, and are, a potent reminder of the history, wealth and power of the city state.

<sup>6</sup> This is discussed below.

national identity and nationalism alongside those of territory.<sup>7</sup> The aim here is to explore multifarious dimensions of the role played by art within national identity. To achieve this consideration must be given to the concept of national identity, and how it might inform or infiltrate fine art images.

From the outset of this research one encounters one real problem. The history of eighteenth-century Scottish art has, in the main, been isolated from a history of British art. Writers of 'British' art history have tended to either neglect Scottish art completely, or to relegate it to a separate chapter and therefore treat it as distinct from, and of less import to, the mainstream of artistic production. Another approach has been simply to assimilate the most successful Scottish artists, David Wilkie and Allan Ramsay, into an English-based history.<sup>8</sup> While it is essential that art production in Scotland, which conforms in many respects to eighteenth-century British art production, be considered within the context of a British, if not Continental art forum, there is evidence for an artistic community that, while engaged with a European tradition, and part of an emerging British art establishment, maintained organizations and traditions that were rooted within a Scottish as opposed British historical tradition.<sup>9</sup>

The conception of identity as manifest in the fine arts necessitates a broad cultural approach to art history, and demands reference to both historic circumstances and culture. Historians of Scottish art have in general preferred to follow a biographical approach, which whilst essential in laying out a particular artist's *oeuvre* is not always congenial to interdisciplinary study. Most of the secondary literature on Scottish art has

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<sup>7</sup> Images of the river Thames were often used in this way, see David Solkin, *Richard Wilson. The Landscape of Reaction*, E.C. Tate Gallery, 1982, 'Historic Britain' pp.77-112, and Andrew Hemingway, *Landscape Imagery and Urban Culture in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain*, Cambridge, 1992, pp.216-45.

<sup>8</sup> For the Englishness of British art history see William Vaughan, 'The Englishness of British Art' *Oxford Art Journal* 1990, vol. 13, 2, pp. 11-23. Ellis Waterhouse, *Painting in Britain 1530-1790*, London, 4th edition 1988, devotes only three pages to painting in Scotland, pp.330-333.

been grounded in, and often, by, such an approach, reiterating, even in the 1990s, of the nineteenth-century approach of the antiquarian David Laing.<sup>10</sup>

Although scholarship has been limited in quantity and often restricted in its cultural and historic reference, some scholars have taken an interdisciplinary approach to eighteenth-century Scottish art. Fintan Cullen has discussed Henry Raeburn's tartan portraits of *Sir John Sinclair of Ulster* (Fig. 1), *Colonel Alastair Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry* (Fig. 2) and *The MacNab* (Fig. 3) in terms of British cultural assimilation, finding in them evidence of a British political national identity.<sup>11</sup> Patricia Brookes' study of the history of the Trustees' Academy in Edinburgh places emphasis upon the role of Scottish Enlightenment figures in the public patronage of art and design in Edinburgh through David Hume's and Lord Kames's positions on the Board of Trustees. Finally Duncan Macmillan has proposed that the Enlightenment concern with perception, and in particular the theories of Thomas Reid, had a direct influence on the portrait painting of Henry Raeburn.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The evidence for this will be given throughout this thesis, in particular chapters four and five.

<sup>10</sup> This is not a criticism of Laing's scholarship, his research is invaluable to the historian of Scottish art. Laing was Librarian of the Signet Library, Secretary of the Bannatyne Club, Foreign Secretary to the Society of Antiquarians of Scotland and Professor of History at the Royal Scottish Academy. He presented a series of lectures at the Royal Scottish Academy on the history of Scottish art - typically they took a chronological and biographical form. Edinburgh University library holds the original manuscripts of these lectures together with the research notes which formed them (La IV 32). These appear to be the basis of later biographical based histories - R. Brydall *Art in Scotland its Origin and Progress*, London, 1889; Stanley Curister, *Scottish Art to the Close of the Nineteenth Century*, London, 1949; James L. Caw, *Scottish Painting 1620-1908*, (1908) reprinted Bath 1990; John Tonge, *The Arts of Scotland*, London, 1936; David and Francina Irwin, *Scottish Painters at Home and Abroad*, London, 1975; Duncan Macmillan, *Scottish Art 1460-1990*, Edinburgh, 1990. It is possible to recognise certain passages of Laing's work even in some of the later histories. The Laing collection of documents, La.IV. 26 (and in a limited way La IV 32), is a more interesting resource for it contains the original documents from which Laing worked; letters pertaining to David Allan, William Allan, John Brown, the Runcimans, Alexander Carse, Richard Cooper, John Donaldson, Thomas Faed, Andrew Foulis, Andrew Geddes, David Wilkie, Henry Raeburn, Allan Ramsay, William Tassie and Jacob Moore. There is also a small number of sketches and account books.

<sup>11</sup> Fintan Cullen, 'The Art of Assimilation: Scotland and Its Heroes,' *Art History*, Vol. 16, No. 4, December 1995, pp. 600-618. This is taken from 'A Kingdom United: Images of Political and Cultural Union in Ireland and Scotland c1800', unpublished doctoral thesis, Yale University 1992.

<sup>12</sup> Patricia Brookes, 'The Trustees' Academy, Edinburgh 1760-1801. The Public Patronage of Art and Design in the Scottish Enlightenment', Unpublished doctoral thesis, Syracuse University 1989, pp.14-24 and pp.212-219, and Duncan Macmillan *Painting in Scotland The Golden Age*, Oxford, 1986, pp. 79-80.

Further, in the numerous general accounts of Scottish art, art historians have often appeared parochial - defining the influences on Scottish artists in purely Scottish terms.<sup>13</sup> The discussion by James Holloway and Lindsay Errington of Scottish landscape painting as integral to a British history has given a lead that has not been taken up by others.<sup>14</sup> Historians have also tended to consider Scotland apart from England, although Linda Colley's *Britons*, has prompted a reassessment of this situation.<sup>15</sup> To ignore the history of the nation state of Britain, in favour of distinct national histories of its constituents, may be historiographically understandable, however, the placing of Scottish art within the exclusive geographical boundaries of the Scottish nation belies historic circumstance.

Scottish artists travelled extensively during the eighteenth century and their outlook was international. They had a broad visual knowledge gained from their own experience, from the wide dissemination of prints, and from the taste and knowledge of their patrons. Significant verification of this can be found in the influence of Dutch art and architecture on Scotland; while important trading links with the Low Countries together with connections through law and medicine at the countries' universities provided channels through which influences could flow.<sup>16</sup> And, of course, the art and

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For a criticism of Professor Macmillan's proposition on Reid and Raeburn and the catalogue in general, see John Hayes 'Scottish Painting at the Tate' *Burlington Magazine*, Dec. 1986, pp.912-914.

<sup>13</sup> Duncan Macmillan in particular presents Scottish art in simply Scottish terms and within Scottish boundaries, see his *Painting in Scotland The Golden Age*, Oxford, 1986 and *Scottish Art 1460-1990*. While acknowledging the tendency of Scottish artists to travel beyond Scotland, David and Francina Irwin do not place Scottish art within the framework of a British history, rather within a Scottish history, taking into consideration their travel abroad.

<sup>14</sup> James Holloway and Lindsay Errington, *The Discovery of Scotland. The Appreciation of Scottish Scenery through Two Centuries of Painting*, EC, NGS, Edinburgh, 1978.

<sup>15</sup> Colley has also pointed out the metropolitan and Anglo-centric nature of English writers of British history, and argues that the rise of Celtic nationalism has encouraged many Welsh and Scottish scholars to focus on their own countries' past. See 'Whose Nation? Class and National Identity in Britain 1750-1830.' *Past and Present*, no.113, November 1986, pp.97-117.

<sup>16</sup> Catalogued in the National Gallery of Scotland's exhibition *Dutch Art and Scotland. A Reflection of Taste*, Julia Lloyd Williams (ed.), 1992.

history of Rome drew Scottish artists and patrons, in common with other European artists and grand tourists.<sup>17</sup>

The numerous Scottish travellers to visit Italy included the Duke of Hamilton in the seventeenth century, who typically collected Italian paintings, and in 1717 the 2nd Marquis of Annandale brought back a collection of over three hundred paintings, drawings, sculptures, books and engravings. Amongst the many notable visitors late in the eighteenth century were the Earls of Hopetoun, and the Clerks of Penicuik who collected the works of the contemporary Italian artist, Imperiali. The Scottish aristocracy were as eager followers of fashions as their English or French counterparts. Among the many who choose to sit for their portraits to the highly popular Pompeo Batoni were the Duke of Roxburgh, Fergusson of Kilkerran, and Lord Cassillis.<sup>18</sup> The Earl of Galloway sat to Mengs and Lord Findlater to Masucci. The British diplomat Sir William Hamilton was one of many Scots long resident in Italy, and Scots visitors could enjoy the company of their country men in the Scottish evenings he hosted in Naples.<sup>19</sup>

Scottish grand tourists, like their English counterparts, were often accompanied by private tutors, for example the 3rd Duke of Buccleuch took with him Adam Smith, and Charles and James Hope travelled with William Rouet, Professor of Church History and Hebrew at Glasgow University.<sup>20</sup> Many tourists used the services of the Cicerone,

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<sup>17</sup> Travel to North America, India, Minorca, Syria, Constantinople, Russia, and later the Middle East, Greece, Spain, Switzerland and central Europe was also undertaken. For Scottish artists abroad see Irwin, *passim*. For the importance of Italy for Scottish artists and patrons in the eighteenth century see Basil Skinner, *Scots in Italy in the Eighteenth Century*, NGS, EC, Edinburgh, 1966, and the Scottish Society for Art History, *Scotland & Italy, papers presented at the fourth annual conference of the Scottish Society for Art History*, Edinburgh, 1989. For the Grand Tour see Andrew Wilton and Ilaria Bignamini, *Grand Tour The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century*, EC, Tate Gallery, 1996.

<sup>18</sup> Skinner (1966), pp 6-12.

<sup>19</sup> For William Hamilton in Naples see Ian Jenkins and Kim Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes Sir William Hamilton and his collection*, EC, British Museum, 1996.

<sup>20</sup> The 8th Duke of Hamilton travelled with his tutor Dr John More, and was painted with both him and his brother Ensign More by Gavin Hamilton. *8th Duke of Hamilton with Dr John More, and Ensign More* (c1775-7, oil on canvas, 701/8 x 40in (178 x 101.5cm), Hamilton Collection, Lennoxlove House, Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland).



Bear Leaders or Antiquaries based in Rome and this profession was dominated by Scots - James Byres, Colin Morison, Abbé Grant, Andrew Lumsden and Gavin Hamilton.<sup>21</sup> The Foulis Academy in Glasgow offered scholarships to Rome before the establishment of the Royal Academy and Basil Skinner records that over fifty Scottish artists travelled to Italy during the eighteenth century.<sup>22</sup> Two of the most successful of these artists were the history painter and antiquary Gavin Hamilton and the landscape painter Jacob More, both of whom took up permanent residence. Thus Rome and Italy were vital as influences upon Scottish artists and patrons as they were for others in the eighteenth century.<sup>23</sup>

Of course Scottish-born artists, like those from the English provinces, were inevitably drawn to London as the centre of patronage and artistic training in Britain, and many spent a proportion of their careers there.<sup>24</sup> They could socialise with fellow Scots at the British Coffee House, opposite the Royal Mews at Charing Cross, or attend the dining club in Sackville Row where they might converse with Adam Ferguson, William Robertson, Alexander Wedderburn, the diarist Alexander Carlyle or the playwright John Home; the home of the modeller James Tassie in Leicester Fields was the meeting place

<sup>21</sup> Skinner (1966), p.15.

<sup>22</sup> Skinner (1966), p.25.

<sup>23</sup> India also drew many Scottish artists. India and the British Empire provided opportunities in public life for Scots, often denied them in London, and the presence of Scots in pre-eminent positions in India encouraged her artists to travel to the colony. Political patronage was obtained through the influence of Henry Dundas, Commissioner of the Board of Trade for India, the political manager and patron of Scotland for the government, and one of Pitt the Younger's most important ministers. He also maintained influence in Scotland through his nephew the Lord Advocate, Robert Dundas. See J. Dwyer, & A. Murdoch, 'Paradigms and Politics: Manners, Morals and the Rise of Henry Dundas, 1770-1784', pp.210-248, in J. Dwyer, R.A. Mason, & A. Murdoch, (eds.) *A New Perspective on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland* Edinburgh, 1982, pp.210-211. See also C. Matheson, *The Life of Henry Dundas, First Viscount Melville*, London, 1933. Although English nationalism was in part a response to the greater numbers of Scots travelling south and the potential patronage of fellow Scots highly placed in politics, it was rarely possible before 1780 for Scots to find positions at the heart of the civilian establishment. Colley (1994), pp. 121-126. For British artists in India see C. A. Bayly, (ed.) *The Raj, India and the British, 1600-1947*, EC, National Portrait Gallery, 1990. For the work of Scots abroad in general see also by the same author *Imperial Meridian The British Empire and the World 1780-1830*, London, 1989.

<sup>24</sup> For English provincial artists see Trevor Fawcett, *The Rise of English Provincial Art. Artists, Patrons and Institutions outside London, 1800-1830*, Oxford, 1974.

of the Highland Society of London.<sup>25</sup> Allan Ramsay early, and later David Wilkie, were both able to establish themselves within elite circles of patronage and the evolving artistic establishment. David Martin, Allan Ramsay's one-time assistant, returned to Edinburgh only after many years in London, and Henry Raeburn, although he had evidently intended to try his fortune in London, for reasons which remain speculative abandoned his plans to do so.<sup>26</sup> In a letter to David Wilkie of 12 September 1819, Raeburn acknowledged the centrality of London to artists in the provinces, and revealed evident frustration at not being at the centre of artistic life. Wishing to know more of other portrait painters he complained that he knew 'as little about them as if I were living at the Cape of Good Hope.'<sup>27</sup> Raeburn evidently wished to be at the heart of artistic developments and to be amongst other artists, that he felt himself on the periphery of artistic life that was centred around London. He was, however, writing in the early decades of the early nineteenth century, by which time the concept of a British nation state was firmly established in the minds and sentiments of its inhabitants; in the second half of the eighteenth century this was an identity that was still at the beginning of its formation, despite almost fifty years of union.

The market for fine art was, and is, patronised by the wealthy elite. But the lure of court and parliament ensured that during the eighteenth century Scotland's elite were often based in London.<sup>28</sup> As a commercial activity, artists had to sell or profit in some

<sup>25</sup> This information is taken from Pat Rogers, *Johnson and Boswell. The Transit of Caledonia*, Oxford, 1995, p.195.

<sup>26</sup> The most up to date research on Raeburn can be found in David Mackie, 'Raeburn, Life and Art', unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1994 and Duncan Thomson, *Raeburn The Art of Sir Henry Raeburn 1756-1823*, EC, SNPG, 1997. Raeburn was made bankrupt in 1808, and although he had paid off much of the debt by the end of the year he was reported in 1819 as still having to work for cash, the work he undertook included making copies of other artists work. He visited London 1810 with a view to settle there, but decided against it. Thomson, pp.26-27.

<sup>27</sup> Henry Raeburn to David Wilkie, 12 September 1819, NLS MS.1003, ff74-75.

<sup>28</sup> The lack of wealthy patrons might, one could argue, result in a market for art in Scotland that was served by provincial artists. The term 'provincial' will be used throughout this thesis and is intended to be read as qualitatively neutral.

form from their work. If an artist was not based in a centre large enough to offer a substantial numbers of potential patrons, then he must travel. To some extent the advent of the Royal Academy annual exhibition assisted provincial artists, enabling them to reach a much larger and more sophisticated London audience. It also provided easier access to changes in fashion, in particular in portraiture, both through first hand experience of the exhibition, and through reports in papers, although these were often far from independent.

What then of the patronage of Scottish artists by members of the Scottish aristocracy or landowning classes? Members of the Scottish aristocracy were responsible for assisting Scottish artists to travel to Italy, and for patronising them there. Sir John Clerk and Robert Alexander of Edinburgh supported John and Alexander Runciman's visit to Italy, the latter also assisted David Martin. Colin Morison and James Clarke were indebted to the patronage of Lord Findlater and Alexander Nasmyth to Patrick Miller of Dalswinton.<sup>29</sup> However, such patronage should not simply be distinguished as 'Scottish'; it was a statement of personal status, taste, benevolence and wealth to offer such support. Gavin Hamilton's *oeuvre* demonstrates that nationality was not a concern to those commissioning works of art. Although James Boswell commissioned a painting from him in Rome of *The Abdication of Mary Queen of Scots*, a distinctly Scottish subject, it was one of only two paintings Hamilton painted in Rome that did not concern classical subject matter (the other being the aforementioned portrait of the Duke of Hamilton).<sup>30</sup> Hamilton's series of large-scale history paintings from Homer's *Iliad* relied on individual patrons, commissioning each of the seven oils, all but

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<sup>29</sup> Skinner (1966), p.25.

<sup>30</sup> *The Abdication of Mary Queen of Scots* (exh. RA.1776, Hunterian Art Gallery, University of Glasgow)

one of which was reproduced as prints. Patrons included the Scots Sir James Grant of Grant and the Duke of Hamilton but also the English Lord Tavistock.<sup>31</sup>

Despite the absence of significant members of the aristocracy and Members of Parliament for much of the eighteenth century, there still resided in Scotland a significant body of wealthy, intellectual and culturally-minded men and women, as evidenced by the flourishing societies and the development of interest in Scottish literature and history.<sup>32</sup> The expansive law profession centred around Edinburgh was composed mainly of members of the landed classes, and in Glasgow the tobacco lords provided a growing source of mercantile wealth.<sup>33</sup> Edinburgh, however, was not only the institutional, but also the intellectual and cultural centre of Scotland and very few artists made their living in Scotland outside of the capital - William Mosman was based in Aberdeen, and in the 1750s William Denune divided his time between Dumfries and Edinburgh.<sup>34</sup>

To go on to consider national identity is to introduce a controversial subject. My position owes much to the work of Anthony D. Smith whose account of national identity sees it as a multifaceted concept that at its core is concerned with self-definition.<sup>35</sup> It is related to ideas of both nations and nationalism, and is but one of numerous identities that an individual might adopt.<sup>36</sup> The Western model of the nation is based upon the idea of historic territory with common rights and responsibilities, common sentiments, ideas, aspirations and understandings, and a common culture and civic ideology.<sup>37</sup>

Smith has described these components as the five fundamental features of national

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<sup>31</sup> Julia Lloyd Williams, *Gavin Hamilton*, Edinburgh, 1994, p. 10. Waterhouse (1988), pp.272-273, has pointed out that a number of these commissions were imposed by Hamilton as part payment for Old Masters and Antiquities in which he dealt.

<sup>32</sup> See chapters three and four.

<sup>33</sup> A general introduction to the economic history of Scotland in the eighteenth century can be found in Henry Hamilton, *An Economic History of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, 1963.

<sup>34</sup> Glasgow grew in importance as an artistic centre only from c1800.

<sup>35</sup> Smith (1991), *passim*, but see p.17 for this point.

<sup>36</sup> See Hobsbawm (1992) p.11 and Smith (1991) p.4. Smith lists familial, territorial, class, religious, ethnic and gender as other identities.

identity and although they will underpin some of the subsequent discussion, they will not be looked at systematically to identify some artistic association or application in art.<sup>38</sup>

The aim, rather, is to explore how national identity can be seen to have impinged on ideas of taste, iconography and value through a study that employs two of the core concerns of Scottish Enlightenment thought - aesthetics and economy.

Together with Smith, Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson have been at the forefront of discussions on nations and nationalism. As Smith has observed the nationalist belief that nations are primordial has been questioned by modern scholars who have argued that nationalism invents nations.<sup>39</sup> Ernest Gellner has been an important advocate of these views and both he and Anderson have placed the creation of nations as contingent with the emergence of nationalism at the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>40</sup> However, Anderson disputes Gellner's proposition that nationalism invents nations, arguing that Gellner assimilates invention to fabrication and falsity rather than imagination and creation.<sup>41</sup> Smith agrees that nationalism does help to create nations, however, his use of the word 'creation' is more in line with Anderson's use of that term than Gellner's 'invention'.<sup>42</sup>

The view held by a number of modern writers, including Gellner, that nations and nationalism are modern phenomena, is, as Smith has argued, problematic.<sup>43</sup> It is, he argues, a view of the nation that is predicated upon the assumption that there is only one criterion for determining the emergence of, and presence of, the nation, the inclusion of

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<sup>37</sup> Smith (1991), pp.1-11.

<sup>38</sup> Smith (1991), p.14.

<sup>39</sup> Smith (1991), pp.43-44.

<sup>40</sup> Gellner further links nationalism to industrialisation, Gellner, p.55 & p.40.

<sup>41</sup> Anderson, p.6.

<sup>42</sup> For Smith's criticism of Gellner's view see Smith (1991) pp.44.

<sup>43</sup> As Smith (1991), p.44 points out, there is disagreement amongst the modernists as to the period in which the nation emerged in Europe, ranging from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. He also points out there are clearly different ideas of the nation at work here.

the masses and women. This, as Smith points out, imposes a Western concept on to different areas and periods, and argues that to all intents and purposes Western European nations predated the rise of nationalism in the eighteenth century.<sup>44</sup> Further, that the concepts on which nationalism as a cultural doctrine (which Smith argues it primarily is) are based, derive from seventeenth and eighteenth-century historical and anthropological discourses.<sup>45</sup>

Central to the idea of nationalism is that of the cultural distinctiveness of nations, and, as Smith has noted, intimations of this idea as well as expressions of national sentiment can be found in the eighteenth century.<sup>46</sup> Ideas of national genius and national identity or character were not uncommon - Shaftesbury, Rousseau, Hume and Montesquieu wrote on these subjects, but their ideas are also found in writings on art, for example Jonathan Richardson, Sir Joshua Reynolds and James Barry.<sup>47</sup> Further, Linda Colley has noted a particular upsurge in consciousness of national characteristics between 1740 and 1760, throughout Europe.<sup>48</sup> However, commentators place the emergence of the ideological movement of nationalism in Scotland to the second half of the nineteenth century, thereby placing the modern concept of nationalism beyond the scope of this dissertation.<sup>49</sup>

Evidence of national identity pre-dating the French Revolution is found not only in philosophical discourses but also in politics and popular culture. National consciousness was expressed at Stowe in the Temple of British Worthies, James

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<sup>44</sup> Smith (1991), p.44-5 & p.100, although he also points out that this imposition is inescapable at least in some form and to some degree.

<sup>45</sup> Smith (1991), p.74.

<sup>46</sup> Smith (1991), p.44.

<sup>47</sup> The above is all derived from Smith (1991), pp.75-90.

<sup>48</sup> For awareness of national identity throughout Europe c1746-1766 see Colley (1994) pp.85-86 and also Colley (1986), pp.100-103.

<sup>49</sup> Gellner admits that while Scottish nationalism exists it may contradict his model as it ignores language, instead invoking a shared historical experience, p.44. For a general discussion of theories of nationalism

Thomson's *Rule Britannia* dates to 1740 and in William Hogarth's *Calais Gate* of 1748-9 we also find national stereotyping.<sup>50</sup> The figure of John Wilkes and his publication, *The North Briton*, are expressions of difference, of perceived differences between the inhabitants of North and South Britain.<sup>51</sup> The *North Briton* was part of the discourse of anti-Bute propaganda of the early 1760s, and a direct response to one of only two pro-Bute publications, Tobias Smollett's *The Briton*. Smollett's publication was intended to provide a counter argument to the saturation coverage the anti-Bute lobby enjoyed in published propaganda, including highly popular and successful satirical prints. The scale of the attack on Bute may be gauged by quoting M. D. George's astounding statistics - that there are extant approximately four hundred anti-Bute and only four pro-Bute prints.<sup>52</sup> The weight of public opinion is implicit in these figures, but further clarification of the divide between North and South Briton is realised in the nature of the attack used by these prints. Bute is vilified as a Scot. In the words of Byron Gassman, the satirists drew on the reputation of Scots in London as poor, barbarous, clannish and treacherous.<sup>53</sup>

Gellner has described national identity as either cultural or voluntarist in nature, Anderson too regards national identity as a cultural artefact and for Smith it is a cultural as well as political and ideological phenomenon.<sup>54</sup> I shall concur with Smith's view that national identity is both political and cultural, that the nation is conceived as a political and territorial community, sharing institutions and rights and duties; that it involves

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and national identity in relation to Scotland see Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past. Scottish Whig historians and the creation of an Anglo-British identity, 1689-1830*, Cambridge, 1993, pp.1-7.

<sup>50</sup> William Hogarth, *Calais Gate* (1748-9, National Gallery, London).

<sup>51</sup> An introduction to Wilkes can be found in Colley (1994), pp.105-117.

<sup>52</sup> M. Dorothy George, *English Political Caricature to 1792. A study of Opinion and Propaganda*, Oxford, 1959, p. 121.

<sup>53</sup> Byron W. Gassman 'Smollett's Briton and the Art of Political Cartooning' in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, Vol.14, 1985, pp.243-258, p.244.

<sup>54</sup> Gellner, p. 7, Anderson, p. 4 & Smith (1991) p. vii and *passim*.

language, genealogy, invention, the use of signs and symbols and a feeling of unity in its inhabitants.<sup>55</sup> Within this definition of national identity its manifestation in Scotland was complex, involving a multiple national identity that was both British and Scottish (following the institutionalized Unions of 1603 and 1707). For both British and Scottish national identities were based on territory, but while the Scottish also had a cultural basis, British national identity was originally a political construct that acquired a cultural basis largely after the formation of, but not dependant upon, the state.<sup>56</sup>

The construction of Edinburgh's New Town is an example of a conscious attempt to construct a British national identity in eighteenth-century Scotland, although given Colley's argument that Britishness was formed through otherness its intentions were perhaps untypical. Alternatively, the self-conscious order and expression of prosperity found in the New Town may articulate a reaction to the otherness of the chaos and deprivation of the old town of Edinburgh. The New Town was built on a grid pattern of patriotic nomenclatures: St Andrew's Square and Charlotte Square mark its two extremes east and west, while George Street commands, from the brow of a hill, the central axis between the two squares, and is crossed by Hanover Street, Frederick Street and Castle Street. The expression of the British nation is clear in the hierarchical naming of the streets, and may even be defined as territorial. Those who lived within its bounds formed a community that the town's civic ideology sought to impress as British. The motivations behind it were equally British (or rather its early Scottish based form of North Britishness), based upon the ideology of Improvement to ensure equality of status with English cities and in particular London.<sup>57</sup> Town planning was therefore used in

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<sup>55</sup> Smith (1991), esp. pp.8-42.

<sup>56</sup> For Britain see Colley (1994), *passim*.

<sup>57</sup> Improvement is discussed below.



Edinburgh as both a symbol and physical embodiment of British national identity, and can be regarded as a device used to engender feelings of attachment to the British nation.

However, such a markedly self-conscious attempt to construct a sense of British national identity highlights the continued import of Scottish national identity in the second half of the eighteenth century. As a former nation state, Scotland had long established cultural and economic connections with other European countries. Educational and trading links with the Netherlands remained intact in the eighteenth century, as did the 'Auld Alliance' with France. The identification of a body of Enlightenment thought with Scotland also testifies to the retention of a distinctive culture following the Union.<sup>58</sup>

The position of Scotland within the development of Enlightenment thought and, in particular the contribution of her philosophers to the development of the idea of moral sentiment is well established and need not be reiterated here.<sup>59</sup> Enlightenment theories of sentiment were not confined to the academic world, nor to the readership of the writings of the *philosophes*.<sup>6</sup> Their ideas were given expression through novels, sermons, plays, periodicals, the popular press and the visual arts, and their wide dissemination amongst the population of Europe enabled such ideas of manners, morals, taste and attitudes to have a profound influence upon European society. The Enlightenment's connections to art and aesthetics are infinite and complex but at a most fundamental level the empirical way of seeing which became established was, as Duncan Macmillan has pointed out, a development of profound importance to the visual arts.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> See chapter four.

<sup>59</sup> There are many books on the Scottish Enlightenment, a general introduction can be found in Gladys Bryson, *Man and Society: The Scottish Inquiry of the Eighteenth Century*, New York, 1968. Other useful texts include Christopher J. Berry, *Social Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment*, Edinburgh, 1997; Anand C. Chitnis, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, London, 1976 and M. A. Stewart (ed.), *Studies in the Philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment*, Oxford, 1990.

<sup>60</sup> Macmillan (1986) chapter II 'Empirical Portraiture' pp.18-30.

Edinburgh, like many other centres of the Enlightenment such as Dublin, Boston or Bordeaux, was a provincial centre. It was her literati rather than her remaining minor nobility or gentry that took the lead in society, though through the latter's institutions.<sup>61</sup> The Enlightenment's international shifts in perspectives and ideas coincided with a fundamentally important period in both Scotland's history and in the formation of Scottish national identity - indeed Nicholas Phillipson has posited that the link between these factors is fundamental. Phillipson argues that one way of looking at the Scottish Enlightenment is as a unique product of the particular social and historic circumstances prevailing in Scotland. It can be regarded as a critique of the classic language of civic morality undertaken by a group of men living in a sophisticated but provincial community which had been stripped of its political institutions at the time of the Act of Union of 1707 and still hankered after an understanding of the principles of virtue which would make sense of their present provincial condition.<sup>62</sup> This reformation of manners and taste, and in particular the dramatic modification of civic humanism which occurred within the milieu of the Enlightenment, and in the historic circumstance of Scotland, had, as intimated above, profound implications for artistic production in contemporary Scotland.<sup>63</sup>

In demonstrating the importance of the issue of national identity for the most influential members of Scottish society, whose own ideas were themselves of international import, Phillipson's approach to the origins and circumstances of the

<sup>61</sup> This argument has been made by Nicholas Phillipson 'Culture and Society in the 18th Century Province: The Case of Edinburgh and the Scottish Enlightenment' in *The University in Society Vol. II, Europe, Scotland and the United States from the 16th to the 20th Century*. Lawrence Stone (ed.), Princeton & London, 1974, 1975, pp. 407-448.

<sup>62</sup> Nicholas Phillipson, 'The Scottish Enlightenment', in R. Porter & M. Teich, (eds.), *The Enlightenment in National Context*, Cambridge, 1987, pp.19-40. p. 22.

<sup>63</sup> Andrew Hemingway, 'The Sociology of Taste in the Scottish Enlightenment' *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 1989, pp.3-35. For the impact of the enlightenment reformation of manners on art in Scotland see chapter four.

Scottish Enlightenment has obvious and real implications for this enquiry into the influences of Scottish national identity on contemporary art production. The central point of Phillipson's argument, that the loss of political power was inextricably tied to a loss of existing notions of civic virtue, impinges on contemporary discussions on art. At the beginning of the century Anthony Ashley Cooper, Lord Shaftesbury was influential in defining the civic purposes of art patronage and connoisseurship, and the civic qualities which art should itself demonstrate through iconography and subject matter. But as the idea of virtue became increasingly personal, and related to feeling, however, much they themselves might be prescribed, so the ideals of art, its purpose, iconography and subjects had also to change in accordance. Hogarth's portrait of *Captain Thomas Coram* marks a point of transformation, for although Hogarth has used the baroque visual language of civic virtue and the painting contains accoutrements of power (a Royal Charter and globe), the emphasis is on the subject's private concerns.<sup>64</sup> As Desmond Shawe-Taylor has pointed out there are a number of similarities between Hogarth's portrait and that of *Sir Hew Dalrymple, Lord Drummore* by Allan Ramsay (Fig. 36).<sup>65</sup> But Ramsay's portrait, whilst incorporating a column and a pose similar to that of Coram, privatises the image still further. The column in the Coram painting has now become a pilaster, thinly projecting upon a mute coloured wall, and, most significantly, the accoutrements of office have been completely removed.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>64</sup> *Captain Coram* (1740, oil on canvas, 94 x 58in (238.8 x 147.3cm), Thomas Coram Foundation, London). Hogarth's use of a French baroque model for this portrait is discussed in F. Antal, *Hogarth and his Place in European Art*, London, 1962. This painting has a strong private resonance as Coram is wearing private dress, and the Royal Charter refers to the Foundling Hospital, an enterprise public in its nature but the private initiative of Coram, and that for which the portrait was painted. The globe makes reference to his own private commercial success which in turn made the hospital possible.

<sup>65</sup> Desmond Shawe-Taylor, *The Georgians. Eighteenth-Century Portraiture and Society*, London, 1990, p.87.

<sup>66</sup> Ramsay's portrait of Hew Dalrymple and its relationship to the ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment are discussed in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Explicit in Phillipson's argument are the problems of national identity associated with the change in Scotland's status from a nation state to a nation, or even a province.<sup>67</sup> The alterations in government, integral to the Union, involved little significant change for England and Wales. Parliament remained at Westminster with political representation and constitution ostensibly untouched. For Scots, changes in governance were substantial: Parliament moved from Edinburgh to London and political representation was transformed - Scottish peers no longer had the automatic right to a seat in parliament, instead sixteen representative peers were elected.<sup>68</sup>

The political creation of the British state in 1707, and the consequent forging of the British nation, involved the adoption by English, Welsh and Scots of a British national identity, in addition to those they already possessed. Linda Colley has argued that Britishness was not created by a process of blending or integration, but in reaction to others: war, a Protestant culture and an overseas empire offered the three nations common ground.<sup>69</sup> It would therefore be wrong to suggest that the mantle of Britishness was immediately or willingly adopted by Scots or English - it clearly was not. Britishness could not displace Scottish or English identities in cultural or sociological terms, nor could it displace them politically, despite a central parliament.

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<sup>67</sup> This process was not simply the result of the Union of the Crowns in 1603. Colin Kidd provides the most useful and detailed historical analysis of this in *Subverting Scotland's Past*, pp.12-50. Scotland's position as a province of England is discussed in chapter five.

<sup>68</sup> Members of the Scottish peerage were not given the automatic right of membership of the House of Lords until 1963, however, this could be overcome by the possession of a British or UK peerage which did give automatic membership. For a list of Scottish elected peers see J.C. Sainty, *A List of Representative Peers for Scotland, 1707 to 1963, and for Ireland, 1800 to 1961*, House of Lords Record Office memorandum No. 39, House of Lords Record Office, 1968. For elected MPs see Sir Lewis Namier and John Brooke, *The History of Parliament. The House of Commons 1754-1790. Vol. 1 Introductory Survey. Constituencies, Appendices. Scotland*, HMSO, 1964, pp. 469- 521.

<sup>69</sup> Colley (1994), p.6 and *passim*. Some scholars have argued that Britain was forged through blending and integration, however, I agree with Colley p.386, fn.9 that the assumption that Britain could only come into being through the creation of some kind cultural uniformity is misplaced. Chapter five of this dissertation demonstrates that this is too simplistic, that local distinctiveness remained important across England and Scotland, and that a dominant London based culture did not simply spread out to produce cultural uniformity.

National identity for Scots in the eighteenth century, then, was both complex and evolving, involving reconciling the apparent opposites of being both British and Scottish. The central issues surrounding the question of identity were the desire to complete the Union, and the economic, cultural and political success of Scotland. Paradoxically it was the denial, or perceived denial, of equality in the British union that drew out Scottish identity. What the terms 'British' and 'Scottish' implied in the late eighteenth century will be considered below, but they were not, and should not be confused with modern definitions of them. The Act of Union of 1707 could not wipe away memories of Scotland as a nation state and, indeed, it secured the survival of the major Scottish institutions - the law, education and religion. The geographical distance from the new political centre and the dangers associated with the journey effectively separated Scotland from the minds of those in power.<sup>70</sup> Hence the changes one might expect with a shift in the physical placement of the political centre were limited. London interfered little in Scottish affairs, and the location of prominent families remained largely unaltered as many members of the Scottish aristocracy had long been resident in England.<sup>71</sup> Between 1707 and 1745 Scotland remained effectively self-governing and the culture and identity of Scotland remained virtually unchanged. However, the real threat posed by the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 changed the British government's attitude, and a process of active involvement in Scottish affairs began in earnest.<sup>72</sup>

By 1750 Scots had the option of thinking of themselves as both Scottish and British. Britishness was initially expressed through the concept of North Britishness, an identity produced by the Union and the cultural reawakening of Scotland during the

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<sup>70</sup> Even in 1847 it took 43 hours to travel between the two capitals, in 1848 the journey time was reduced to twelve hours with the advent of the first rail link. Michael Lynch, *Scotland A New History*, London, revised edition 1992, 1998, p.357.

<sup>71</sup> For a discussion of why many of these prominent members of the Scottish aristocracy chose to return to reside in Scotland in the 1770s see Dwyer & Murdoch (1982).

eighteenth century, and established by 1750.<sup>73</sup> J.G.A Pocock has described North Britishness in succinct terms as 'signifying a Scotsman who in the eighteenth century believed that the Union of 1707 had established either a common nationality or an equality between two nations.'<sup>74</sup> Colin Kidd has pointed out that it was not an identity that can be bounded by a specific definition and he argues that it should, instead, be understood as a 'set of parameters comprehending the standard responses of mid and late eighteenth-century Scots to Union' - an identity that was the temporary product of both the particular circumstances of Union and eighteenth-century Scottish renaissance.<sup>75</sup> He describes North Britishness as an English provincial identity, as it too emulated the patriotisms that were concerned with the 'extension of English exceptionalism within the wider British world.'<sup>76</sup> Further, North Britishness was a multifaceted and multi-layered identity, incorporating the 'head and heart' solution to Scottish national identity through the dual loyalties of a 'self- interested attachment to the expanding core of English commercial opportunity, without compromising their emotional identification with Scotland.'<sup>77</sup> But its most dominant characteristic lay in the adoption of an English political identity, therefore making North Britishness an Anglo-centric identity.<sup>78</sup>

During the 1760s and 1770s the London-based Scottish aristocracy, which dominated Scots politics, demonstrated a renewed interest in Scottish affairs.<sup>79</sup> This change in sympathies was brought about in reaction to others, in particular to the anti-

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<sup>72</sup> Colley (1994), p.12. For a general introduction to Scottish history see Lynch.

<sup>73</sup> There was an equivalent term for the geographic area of England, South Britain, it did not, however, gain widespread use. See J.G.A Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce and History. Essays on Political Thought and History, chiefly in the Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1985, pp. 127-128.

<sup>74</sup> Pocock, pp.127-128.

<sup>75</sup> Colin Kidd, 'North Britishness and the nature of eighteenth century British Patriotisms', *Historical Journal*, 39, 2, (1996), pp.361-382, p.361

<sup>76</sup> Kidd (1996), p.362.

<sup>77</sup> Kidd (1996), p.362.

<sup>78</sup> Kidd (1996), p.362. Here Kidd disagrees with Colley (1994) over the nature of North Britishness, finding it to be Anglo-centric rather than British.

<sup>79</sup> The following discussion is taken from Dwyer & Murdoch (1982), pp.216-219.

Scottish attacks that were widespread in the London press, themselves the result of the Scots' detachment from political opposition to George III coupled with the belief that Scots were gaining proportionately too much power and using their positions to promote their fellow countrymen.<sup>80</sup> The attitude of the English to the Scots during the second half of the century may be considered through the English public's reaction to the first Scottish Prime Minister, Lord Bute.<sup>81</sup> Many prints of the early 1760s, the height of the Bute crisis, refer to this perceived nepotism through the imagery of Scotsmen 'leap-frogging' physical posts. *The Laird of the Posts or the Bonnett's Exalted* of 1762 (Fig. 4) is a typical example and represents the dismissal of the Duke of Newcastle from his political position. Scotsmen dressed in tartan and wearing bonnets leap from post to higher post, pushing their present incumbents, English gentlemen, from them. To the side a mob of Scotsmen stand eager to grab a post for themselves, accompanied by all of their friends and relations.<sup>82</sup>

The sense of disillusionment felt in particular by London based Scots, served to heighten a sense of difference, most obviously manifested as Scottishness. British State intervention in Scotland also increased at this time, but rather than strengthening the Union, apparent differences in treatment to England simply engendered a sense of unfairness. The Militia Act of 1757 which provided a militia in England and Wales but denied one in Scotland, was understood as a slur on the trustworthiness of the Scots, implicitly questioning their full participation in the Union.<sup>83</sup> Economics, trade, the

<sup>80</sup> For English reaction to Scots' advancement see Colley (1994), pp.117-125.

<sup>81</sup> John Brewer has considered Bute's treatment in 'The Misfortunes of Lord Bute: a Case Study in Eighteenth-Century Political Argument and Public Opinion', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. XVI, No. 1, 1973, pp.3-43.

<sup>82</sup> As will be discussed in chapter two, tartan was associated with Jacobitism. The fact that Bute was being associated with this image also served to brand him as a traitor and therefore George III as a dupe.

<sup>83</sup> The Act caused fierce public reaction in Scotland, prompting the Poker Club to be established as a means of agitating public and government opinion. For the Militia question see John Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue*, Edinburgh, 1985.

church and law were other issues in which British government intervention was regarded as either unjust or unfair. That the development of an anglicised North British identity was predicated on the perceived security of Scottish institutions explains why British intervention within the law and church could be regarded as threatening, as opposed to enhancing the Union.<sup>84</sup>

But it was not simply English hostility that caused disquiet amongst the Scots. John Dwyer and Alexander Murdoch have argued that Scots were also disturbed by the changes in English politics that occurred both during and after the Seven Years War, in particular the new concentration on party organisation and financial manipulation.<sup>85</sup> Most representatives of the Scottish peerage ceased attending the house of Lords between 1763 and 1775. Usually resident in London, they returned to Scotland in significant numbers in the 1760s. A desire to return to traditional modes of representation and patronage was also expressed by the Scottish landed classes, and the return of the aristocracy coincided with, and reinforced, Scottish landed society 'at a time when it began, as a group, to raise its ambitions and have an important effect on the development of the country.'<sup>86</sup> In effect the Scottish aristocracy withdrew from the politics of London and transposed their civic responsibilities from the government of Britain to that of their estates and their improvement.

Improvement, a general concern of the Scottish elite during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, was most significantly realised in the 'civilization' of the Highlands following the 'Forty-Five, and was key to the identity of the new elite of literati and minor aristocracy and gentry that asserted their position in Edinburgh during

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<sup>84</sup> Kidd (1996) p.364 and Janet Adam Smith, 'Some Eighteenth Century Ideas of Scotland', in N. T. Phillipson and Rosalind Mitchison (eds.) *Scotland in the Age of Improvement*, Edinburgh, 1970, reprinted 1996, pp.109-110.

<sup>85</sup> Dwyer & Murdoch (1982), pp.217-8.

<sup>86</sup> Dwyer & Murdoch (1982), pp.217-218.



the second half of the century.<sup>87</sup> In post-Union Scotland, economic and agricultural progress was connected to a (Scottish) patriotic urge to be an equal partner with England. An assessment of her relative position was famously and succinctly articulated by Alexander Wedderburn in the preface to the *Edinburgh Review* of 1755-6, 'If countries have their ages with respect to improvement North Britain may be considered as in a state of early youth, divided and supported by the mature strength of her kindred country.'<sup>88</sup> The belief held by Scotland's influential parties, that the nation's future lay in improvement has, as Dwyer and Murdoch argue, nationalistic overtones.<sup>89</sup>

As a central tenet of European Enlightenment thought, the concept of Improvement was broad in its applications – agrarian, economic, moral and social. Agricultural reform was central to political discussion in Scotland, and its implementation there followed the enclosures and improvements in animal husbandry and crop rotation begun in England. Indeed Scottish landowners looked to England for ideas of how to improve their land.<sup>90</sup> However, landowners were not exclusively concerned with agriculture, and encouraged industry either through direct involvement or through financial assistance.<sup>91</sup> Many of Improvement's most influential exponents were also members of the Scottish literati. Economic improvement found its most famous expression in Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* first published in March 1776<sup>6</sup> and

<sup>87</sup> See Phillipson (1975), p.441.

<sup>88</sup> The changes in agricultural practices in the Highlands, begun before the 'Forty-Five and which led eventually to the clearances, are discussed in chapter two.

<sup>89</sup> Dwyer & Murdoch (1982), p.219, argue that there was agreement amongst large and small landowners, the *nouveaux riches* and the traditional ruling elite, mercantile wealth and landed wealth, that Scotland's future lay in rapid economic growth.

<sup>90</sup> T. M. Devine, 'Social Responses to Agrarian 'Improvement': the Highland and Lowland Clearances in Scotland', in R. A. Houston & I. D. Whyte (eds.), *Scottish Society 1500-1800*, Cambridge, 1989, pp.148-168. For improvement in England see Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People, England 1727 - 1783*, Oxford, 1989, 1992, pp.389-459, and for agricultural improvement in particular see J. D. Chambers and G.E. Mingay, *The Agricultural Revolution 1750-1880*, London, 1966, 1975.

<sup>91</sup> Alastair J. Durie, 'Lairds, Improvements, Banking and Industry in Eighteenth-Century Scotland: Capital and Development in a backward economy – a case study', in T. M. Devine (ed.) *Lairds and Improvement in the Scotland of the Enlightenment*, proceedings of the 9<sup>th</sup> Scottish Historical Conference, University of

moral and civil improvement were central to the works of David Hume, Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith, William Robertson, Lord Kames, and John Millar.<sup>92</sup> Not only does this list of illustrious names exemplify the importance of Scottish thought to these ideas, it also demonstrates the importance of the idea of civil progress to Scotland during the eighteenth century.

It was in the clubs and improving societies of Edinburgh that the intellectual ideas of the literati, together with the patriotic zeal of the elite, brought to practical fruition the theoretical and moral ideals of Improvement in the promotion of agricultural, industrial and civil progress.<sup>93</sup> The first of these improving societies, the Honourable Society of Improvements in the Knowledge of Agriculture, was founded in 1720 to spread knowledge of new farming techniques, while in the second half of the century the commissioners of the annexed estates utilised the idea of 'improvement' for political as much as agricultural or social ends.<sup>94</sup> The Annexing Act of 1752 enabled the commissioners of the estates, forfeited after the 'Forty-Five, to use the rent and profits from the estates to 'civilise' and 'improve' the Highlands. The work of the commissioners was motivated by the perceived political necessity of bringing the Highlands culturally and economically into line with the rest of Britain, in order to counter their potential threat. The means of Improvement in the region reflected these ends: the spread of the protestant religion, the principles of duty and loyalty to the king, the encouragement of industry and manufacture, as well as

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Edinburgh, 1978, pp.21-30. Durie records that quite a few landowners, such as the Clerks of Penicuik or the Erskines of Mar were active participants in a variety of industries from textile to mining.

<sup>92</sup> A good general introduction to Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* can be found in R. H. Campbell and A.S. Skinner *Adam Smith*, London, 1982, pp.168-185. Works include Hume's *Enquiries concerning Human Understanding and concerning the Principles of Morals* (1741) and *Essays; Moral, Political and Literary* (1749); Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759); Ferguson's *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767); and Millar's *Observations concerning the Distinction of Ranks in Society* (1771) and *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks* (1779).

<sup>93</sup> The role of Edinburgh societies in providing motivation, ideas, and general encouragement for the improvement of Scotland, and consequently Britain, is discussed in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

agricultural improvement. One of the results of the commissioners' efforts was the formation of new manufacturing companies and the promotion of many locally relatively untested trades. Most important of these was the encouragement of linen manufacture, which another improving body, the Board of Trustees for Manufactures and Fisheries, also sought to promote.<sup>95</sup> The Trustees' idea of improvement was similarly broad, encouraging manufacture and means of agricultural improvement through the award of prizes for designs, drawings and essays; their drawing academy played a central role in their work. Improvement was thus political, social and commercial, but most significantly it was also patriotic. T. C. Smout has argued that the desire for 'national opulence' was nowhere 'more closely allied to the language of patriotism than in the literature of rural improvement, where the self-interest of the improver and his country were constantly assumed to be identical.'<sup>96</sup>

After the Union (in part through the major Scottish institutions) Scottish national identity continued to be expressed. But the nature of Scottish identity was not unproblematic: the perceived past failure of Scottish institutions and the actual failure of the Darien scheme, together with misgivings over Scottish political culture had not produced a comfortable or confident identity comparable with that of English Liberty.<sup>97</sup> Indeed North Britishness sought English liberty as one of the main constituents of its identity. In addition, the distinct cultural division between the Highlands and the

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<sup>94</sup> For the role of the commissioners of the annexed estates in the encouragement of manufactures and industry see Annette M. Smith, 'State Aid to Industry – An Eighteenth-Century Example', in Devine (1978), pp.47-58.

<sup>95</sup> Other industries that the commissioners encouraged were tanning, paper making, and mining. The Board of Trustees had £10,000 to encourage the manufacture of linens in the Highlands from 1753-1762, however, the commissioners' aims were often beyond their means, Annette M. Smith (1978), pp.47-48, 55.

<sup>96</sup> T. C. Smout, 'Problems of Nationalism, Identity and Improvement in later Eighteenth-Century Scotland' in T. M. Devine (ed.), *Improvement and Enlightenment*, Proceedings of the Scottish Historical Studies Seminar, University of Strathclyde 1987-88, Edinburgh, 1989, pp. 1-21, p.15.

<sup>97</sup> The Darien Scheme was the failed first attempt by Scotland at overseas expansion in the late seventeenth century, see Lynch, pp.307-310.

Lowlands may be considered as problematic in thinking about Scottish identity - the Lowlanders had more in common with their southern than their northern neighbours.<sup>98</sup> However, the collective cultural identity of a nation does not, as Anthony Smith argues, refer to a uniform culture, rather one that has a sense of continuity over and with past generations.<sup>99</sup> Scots could trace a shared history, had a defined territory as well as economic, legal and education system, factors that undoubtedly serve to define, and continued to define her as a nation, even after the Union.

Thus the identities centred on the physical masses of Britain and Scotland were able to co-exist. They overlapped, were interchangeable, depending upon geography, circumstance, society or issue. Individuals could be North British, Scottish or even English depending upon circumstance and topic. Boswell's attitude towards his country of birth is perhaps one of the most famous eighteenth-century examples. A lowland Scot, he was contemptuous of Highlanders, comparing boatmen off the coast of Skye to 'wild Indians', and although like Hume keen to be rid of his Scotticisms, he harboured plans for a Scottish national dictionary.<sup>100</sup>

Eighteenth-century Scotland witnessed a new interest in Scottish culture, in part precipitated by the Act of Union. Allan Ramsay senior (1684/5 - 1758), was a founder member of the Easy Club, where in addition to discussions of poetry, members debated Anglo-Scottish relations.<sup>101</sup> He sought to promote a history of Scottish poetry, and to

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<sup>98</sup> This was recognised by Highlanders in their common description of lowland Scots, and Englishmen, as Sassenachs.

<sup>99</sup> Smith (1996), p.25.

<sup>100</sup> Quoted in Rogers, p. 214. For Boswell's dictionary see Lynch p.344.

<sup>101</sup> The best introduction to Scottish literature of this period is Andrew Hook (ed.) *The History of Scottish Literature, Vol. 2 1660-1800*, Aberdeen, 1987, 1989. For Ramsay see Alexander M. Kinghorn & Alexander Law 'Allan Ramsay and Literary Life in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century' in Hook (1989) pp.65-79, for the Easy Club see p.66.

continue its traditions of language and syntax. This exercise was overtly patriotic and was continued by Robert Burns and Robert Fergusson later in the century.<sup>102</sup>

The revival of an older culture, in the search for the antecedents of the present one, served to produce a legitimising lineage for contemporary literature and history, a cultural expression of continuity with the past; as a means of demonstrating cohesion it was widespread. Samuel Smiles's research into the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' imagining of Britain's archaic past through the collection, debate and ordering of that past, is concerned mainly with visual examples. However, he also emphasises that poetry, literature, history and antiquarian interests were interleaved to construct a history suitable for the age, and which was also evident in other European countries.<sup>103</sup> As one of the most important expressions of the archaic society of Wales was held to be the Bard, the titular centre of Thomas Gray's highly popular and influential poem, *The Bard*, of 1757, James Macpherson's 'translations' of the epic poems of *Ossian* were as important. Although they have often been described as frauds, this is, as Fiona Stafford has pointed out, a simplification of their construct as Macpherson was a collector of local Highland ballads and tales from oral recitation.<sup>104</sup> Regarding them in a wider context, the poems of *Ossian* are a demonstration of the perceived need to create a Scottish past and hence a distinctive Scottish identity. The construction of a Scottish epic past, found in the poems of *Ossian*, was quickly and widely dispersed in Scotland, and

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<sup>102</sup> Burns's use of the vernacular is extremely familiar, but Fergusson too used vernacular language, composing works in the mode of Juvenal, Horace and Virgil, he even planned to translate *The Georgics* into Scots. For Fergusson see F.W. Freeman, 'Robert Fergusson: Pastoral and Politics at Mid-Century' in Hook (1989). For the patriotic nature of Scottish literary culture see Lynch p.343, David Daiches, *The Paradox of Scottish Culture: The Eighteenth Century Experience*, London, 1964, pp.1-35 and Smith (1996), pp.115-120. Interest in Scottish culture was not confined to literature, Scottish history and antiquities also attracted scholarship, for example Anderson's 1705 publication *Historical Essay Showing that the Crown and Kingdom of Scotland Is Imperial and Independent* and Abercrombie's *Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation*, etc. of 1711, see Phillipson (1975), p.429.

<sup>103</sup> Samuel Smiles, *The Image of Antiquity. Ancient Britain and the Romantic Imagination*, London, 1994.

<sup>104</sup> Fiona Stafford, 'Introduction: The Ossianic Poems of James Macpherson' in Howard Gaskill (ed.) *The Poems of Ossian and Related Works*, Edinburgh, 1996, pp.v-xxi, and p.xi.

internationally from the late eighteenth century and into the nineteenth.<sup>105</sup> *Ossian* also provided the subject matter for the only large scale series of history paintings produced in Scotland during the later eighteenth-century.<sup>106</sup>

These examples demonstrate both the renewed literary interest in Scotland's past following the Union, that although part of wider antiquarian interest also affirm a sense Scottish national identity in both writer and reader. We must then return to art. The subject as representation of national identity is of course important to any discussion of art and national identity, and is pertinent in relation to Scotland. Therefore the question of identity will firstly be addressed by considering the representation of national identity in Scotland by the symbolic use of tartanry and Highland dress, and in doing so outline the problems of identifying an historical representation with contemporary notions of national identity.

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<sup>105</sup> For the international reaction to *Ossian* see H. Okun, 'Ossian in Painting' *JWCI*, XXX, 1967, pp.327-56.

<sup>106</sup> For *Ossian's Hall* see John Duncan Macmillan, 'The Earlier Career of Alexander Runciman and the influences that shaped his style', unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1973.

**Chapter Two**  
**Before Walter's Scot(t); Images of Highland Landowners**  
**in the late Eighteenth Century.**

Any attempt to trace a sense of national identity in Scotland must consider its most prevailing image: tartan and Highland dress. Portraits of men and women dressed in tartan plaid or kilt were not uncommon in the eighteenth century, and have seventeenth-century precedents. During the nineteenth century, under the influence of first Sir Walter Scott and then Victoria, it became a popular form of representation, and not only for those with Highland connections.<sup>1</sup>

It has been generally assumed that portraits of men in Highland dress represent Scottishness and embody Scottish national identity. This assumption is to be challenged here.<sup>2</sup> The study of dress has been relatively neglected by art historians and our knowledge of its significance has only recently begun to expand.<sup>3</sup> Sitters' wearing of Highland dress does distinguish their portraits from other portraits of British men of this period. However, assuming that a particular outfit necessarily leads to a uniform meaning in portraiture is both unsophisticated and questionable. I shall attempt to demonstrate the necessity of a more diverse and sophisticated engagement with Highland portraits; first by deconstructing their

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<sup>1</sup> This dissertation will not consider tartan and Highland dress in relation to the popular image of Prince Charles Edward Stuart. For this see Robin Nicholson 'The tartan portraits of Prince Charles Edward Stuart: identity and iconography', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 21, no.2, Autumn 1998, pp.145-160.

<sup>2</sup> While this assumption is made mainly at a popular level, it even permeates, on occasion, into academic literature. François Boucher, *A History of Costume in the West*, London, 1966, expanded edition 1987, p.315, states erroneously that 'The outstanding feature of Scottish costume is the tartan woven in the colours of the clan.' - highland dress and Scottish national costume conflated without qualification. Moreover, as will be demonstrated here, the idea of 'clan tartan' is problematic, especially before 1822.

<sup>3</sup> The most important contribution to the study of dress is Aileen Riberio, *The Art of Dress Fashion in England and France 1750-1820*, London, 1995, see also Boucher, and Anne Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes*,

present, arguably anachronistic, reading, and then by establishing an appropriate historical context, and setting them within a history of European portraiture of the eighteenth century. The portraits to be discussed include Ramsay's portraits of *Norman, 22<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Macleod* (Fig. 5), *William, 18<sup>th</sup> Earl of Sutherland* (Fig. 6), *Hugh Montgomery, 12<sup>th</sup> Earl of Eglinton* (Fig. 7) by John Singleton Copley, and portraits of *Sir Robert Dalrymple of Castleton* (Fig. 8) and *John Campbell of the Bank* (Fig. 9), both by William Mosman. *Sir Alexander Macdonald of Sleat* (Fig. 10) by an unknown artist, and Raeburn's famous chiefs, *The MacNab* (Fig. 3) and *Alastair Macdonell of Glengarry* (Fig. 2) will also be considered.<sup>4</sup>

The portraits of *William, 18<sup>th</sup> Earl of Sutherland* (Fig. 6), *Sir Alexander Macdonald of Sleat* (Fig. 10) and *The MacNab* (Fig. 3) are characteristic of eighteenth-century 'Highland' portraits, with each portraying at full-length a powerful and military male in a Highland setting. The problems of cultural association and difference, encountered by the eighteenth-century viewer of these images, have yet to be fully considered. Generally regarded as military portraits representing heroes who sought to be identified as specifically Scottish, the overwhelming visual impact of tartan and Highland dress, together with this costume's fundamental role in the pageant designed by Scott to celebrate George IV's visit to Scotland in 1822, has ensured that they have often been viewed as part of a Scottish 'tradition', with little consideration given to their diversity.<sup>5</sup>

Highland portraits, as I shall term this group of paintings, have been popularly interpreted as representing Scottish military heroes, dressed in the traditional and national

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London, 1975, 1993. Riberio, p.6, claims that clothes are the starting point for both sitter and artist, that the choice of costume was crucial to both.

<sup>4</sup> A copy of Copley's portrait of Hugh Montgomery is in the SNPG, Edinburgh.

<sup>5</sup> This expectation has even filtered into academic studies, for example Ramsay's portrait of Norman, 22<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Macleod is described by Andrew Wilton in *The Swagger Portrait*, Tate Gallery, EC, 1992, p.116, as follows, 'With it he [Ramsay] contributed decisively to the long line of portraits, depicting Highland chieftains in their clan tartans.' This statement exemplifies the uniform reading that such portraits are generally given.



costume – with Highland dress itself stereotyped as a tartan kilt - and through this interpretation they have become icons of Scottish national identity. Such portraits have also been regarded as militaristic and heroic, and, to an extent they often employ the iconography of the military hero. *Norman 22<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Macleod* (Fig. 5) conforms to the general description of an heroic man, confident and independent, alone in a vast and sublime landscape, his body rising up from the base of the painting to fill and dominate the world he possesses.<sup>6</sup> And while this might apply to innumerable portraits of military heroes from many periods, the difference here is the sitter does not wear armour or a pseudo Roman toga nor, as with Reynolds's heroic military sitters, uniform, but is dressed instead in a brightly coloured swathe of tartan, draped in a distinctive and unique way. Except that he may not even be a military hero.

The interpretation of Highland portraits as military, while justified in some cases, is at least, as we shall see, understandable in others.<sup>7</sup> However, the interpretation of these images within exclusively militaristic and nationalistic discourses ignores the inherent culture of the sitters, and imposes upon the portraits an interpretation that is largely external, and arguably imperialist in origin. Current interpretations of these images should not be dismissed, not least due to the complex development of the Highland myth both within and without Gaelic society, but this consistency of reading places these portraits within the fixity of a stereotype created by seeing them as portraits of otherness, of reading them through an ideological construction that Homi K. Bhabha has described as a feature of colonial

<sup>6</sup> For heroic male portraiture of the eighteenth century see Shawe-Taylor, pp. 33-60 and David Solkin, 'Great pictures of Great Men? Reynolds, the Male Portraiture, and the Power of Association', *Oxford Art Journal*, 9, no.2, 1986, pp.42-9.

<sup>7</sup> Cullen (1993), his interpretation of Raeburn's Highland portraits is founded on the sitters' military connections. The interpretation of these portraits will be challenged in this dissertation.

discourse.<sup>8</sup> The stereotype, he argues, ensures its repeatability in changing historical and discursive conjunctures, which accords with the uniform interpretation of these images, produced across a period of over two hundred years, in which enormous cultural, economic and social changes occurred within the culture of the sitter.<sup>9</sup> However, if these images are to be understood, rather than being the subject of stereotype, consideration must be given to the history of Highland identity and the historical circumstances surrounding the contemporary production and viewing of these portraits.

Their interpretation is extremely problematic. The layering of myth and history which has become entangled in the construction of a Scottish national identity, based upon the image of the Highlands, has over ridden viewers' reactions to Highland portraits since the nineteenth century, and, arguably, earlier. In addition, the full assimilation, in Scotland, of Highland identity with a Scottish national identity, indeed the latter's construction within the former, may be identified with Scott's stage management of the visit of George IV to Edinburgh in 1822, when Scotland's lowland and Highland aristocracy, together with the British king, subsumed an image of the Highlands to form a unified 'Scottish' identity.

The events of 1822 have been well documented. However, given the pageant's essential role in the creation of Highland identity as a Scottish national identity, it is worth reiterating some relevant details of George IV's visit.<sup>10</sup> Walter Scott directed the ceremony,

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<sup>8</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London, 1994, p.66.

<sup>9</sup> Bhabha, p.66.

<sup>10</sup> For its importance to the creation of the myth of the Highland tradition see Hugh Trevor-Roper 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland' in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 1983, pp.15- 41, especially, pp.29-31. A number of accounts of the King's visit were published shortly afterwards together with poems and songs celebrating the patriotism displayed, although Scott's 'tartanization' of the event did not go uncriticized. See for example [James Simpson] *Letters to Sir Walter Scott, Bart on the Moral and Political Character and effects of the Visit to Scotland in August 1822, of his Majesty King George IV*, Edinburgh 1822, Letter III, p.74 'The opinion is not uncommon, that the Highlanders had more than their share of Royal notice; that the whole land was *tartanized*, in the royal eye, from Pentland to Solway.' This element of controversy has been noted by John Prebble in his popular account of the visit, *The King's Jaunt: George IV in Scotland 1822*, London, 1988. A contemporary account is given

assisted by the historian of Highland life, traditions and regiments, Colonel David Stewart of Garth.<sup>11</sup> The guards of honour were drawn from the members of the Celtic club and were 'dressed in proper costume.' Further, Scott proclaimed that the royal visit was to be 'a gathering of the Gael' and Highland chiefs were encouraged to come with a retinue of clansmen. George IV famously also wore Highland dress and the toast was drunk to 'the chieftains and clans of Scotland.' The pageantry, centred around Highland chiefs, had two important repercussions: firstly as the demand for tartan had been so large, manufacturers were able to sell setts from the peg as specific 'clan tartans' and secondly, a fundamentally important long term result of this display, was, as various contemporary commentators complained, that Scotland became identified with the Highlands.<sup>12</sup>

However, the conflation of Highland and Scottish identities initiated in Scotland during the later eighteenth century had already taken place in England over a century before. In English popular culture of the eighteenth century, Highland dress was associated with Scotland and Scottishness in general, an association made in written and visual culture through the formation of stereotypes that expressed negative personal, political and social behaviour. Peter Womack has identified these as consistent with traditional stereotypes of the social reject; the fool, the rogue and the beggar, highly negative constructs, to confirm

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in [Robert Mundle] *A Historical Account of His Majesty's Visit to Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1822. A number of artists, including Turner and Wilkie, recorded the visit adding to the process of myth creation, see Gerald Finley *Turner and George the Fourth in Edinburgh*, London, 1981.

<sup>11</sup> Trevor-Roper, p.29, points out that Colonel David Stewart of Garth had published in 1822, *Sketches of the Character, Manners and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland*.

<sup>12</sup> This account of George IV's visit is taken from Trevor-Roper, pp.30-31. Trevor-Roper also explains that in 1819 one of the largest manufacturers of regimental tartans, William Wilson and Son of Bannock Burn, prepared a Key Pattern Book of tartans which the Highland Society 'certified' as belonging to particular clans. However, such was the state of orders in 1822 that tartans were simply relabelled, for example the chief of the clan Macpherson was given a tartan that had been used by a Mr Kidd for his West Indian slaves, and was therefore known as Kidd; it had earlier been known as No.155. Trevor-Roper, p.31 quotes J.G. Lockhart and Lord Macaulay on the peculiarity of this identification. Lockhart described the event as an 'hallucination' in which 'the marking and crowning glory of Scotland' was identified with the Celtic tribes.

the superior stability of the observer, who is English.<sup>13</sup> Using literary sources, Womack has also argued that the negative image of the Highlander, signified through identifiers such as bagpipes, became mixed up with that of the Scot in general, and this association became further confused in the 1760s with the tripartite connection made in anti-Bute literature between Tory, Jacobite and Scot.<sup>14</sup>

This complex layering of identities found in popular anglophone literary images of Highlanders is similarly found in popular prints. The fool can be exemplified by *Sawney in the Boghouse* (Fig. 11) a famous print published just before the Jacobite rebellion of 1745. As a Highlander, indicated by his tartan kilt, Sawney is incapable of carrying out even the most basic of bodily functions, unused as he is to the basic trappings of civilized life found in London.<sup>15</sup>

The 'beggarly Scot' was often personified in the figure of John Bull's Sister Peg, an ugly and scrawny woman depicted riding on the back of, or supported by, the English John Bull, to let us know that England was obliged to maintain its more needy, and idle, relation, Scotland. *A Poor Man Loaded with Mischiee [sic] or John Bull and his Sister Peg* (Fig. 12) published in 1762 at the height of anti-Bute and anti-Scottish feeling, besides embodying this contempt, also contains another stereotype, the 'rascal'. *The Mountebank* (Fig. 13), also published in May 1762 is a more straightforward image of Scots begging. Lord Bute stands high upon a stage, his fool, Tobias Smollett, stands to his left whilst Bute's Harlot (the Dowager Princess of Wales) peeks from behind the stage curtain, looking lasciviously

<sup>13</sup> Peter Womack *Improvement and Romance. Constructing the Myth of the Highlands*, London, 1989, pp.6 & 14.

<sup>14</sup> Womack, p.16.

<sup>15</sup> 'Sawney' is the generic name given to Scots in satirical and political prints. This particular image was widely disseminated, even appearing on a punchbowl produced in China (National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh), to indicate the extent to which this type of negative imagery permeated and penetrated every area of (English) social life.

at Bute. Bute displays bags of lozenges as a cure for the 'Scotch itch' to the crowd, a crowd composed of men in bonnets, tartan and Highland dress who hold out their hands begging for the cure (or the money it represents).

An example of the Scot as rogue occurs in *The Highland Visitors* (Fig. 14) (published 1745/6). The Jacobite army (and note the literary and visual equation with Highlanders) is depicted on its invasion south, carrying out senseless murders, of both people and animals, raping women and stealing property. The English village they have ravaged is depicted as neat, ordered and religious. From a gallows-like structure hangs a pub sign, The Old Crown. In the near distance a vast line of neatly ordered English soldiers has begun to march along the street.<sup>16</sup>

Thus the conflation of Highland with Scottish identity was formed in English popular culture, through negative stereotypes, based broadly on identification through Highland dress, from the 1740s onwards, reaching a crescendo in the 1760s. Those who sat for their portraits in Highland dress must have been aware of this. This raises interesting questions as to the relationship between the sitter's self- image and the external ideas imposed upon that image when it was fixed in portraiture. While portraits are clearly designed to impress the viewer, the degree of autonomy of self- image retained by the sitter in relation to this desire is problematised here.

However, a more constructive stereotype also developed during the eighteenth century, in which Highlanders (and to an English audience, Scots in general), were associated with the more positive mantle of military prowess, through the success of the Highland companies in overseas wars, particularly during the Seven Years War. This positive image and identity will be discussed in full with reference to a specific group of

Highland portraits, but it is the co-existence of negative and positive images of Highlanders within English, and British minds that is of interest here.

To those outside Highland culture, the interpretation of Highland portraits was, in the eighteenth century, therefore subject to a number of different negative and positive stereotypes. The image of the Highlander had by the mid-eighteenth century come to represent Scotland in English popular culture, but it was an image with negative associations for important political as well as cultural reasons. In Scotland itself, Highlanders, with their own distinguished Gaelic culture and language were, until the early nineteenth century, regarded as distinct from the lowlander, and from the latter's point of view inferior.<sup>17</sup> Therefore for most of this period the Highland image did not embody an encompassing Scottish national identity.

Matters become even more complicated when we take into account the fact that many of the portraits to be discussed were painted between 1746 and 1782, when the wearing of Highland costume was proscribed. The proscription applied only in Scotland, and the Highland regiments were excluded from the rule, but even so its representation in portraits is potent and complex. Although portraits of sitters in Highland dress posed no problems within the law, it was the costume and not its picture that was banned and a sitter need not wear a costume to be painted wearing it. Nonetheless, to show a Highland chief or landlord in Highland dress during this period was politically charged.

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<sup>16</sup> In addition these stereotypes were often endowed with an unnatural sexual potency and an itch.

<sup>17</sup> The expression of difference between lowland Scots and Highlanders has historically been expressed from the perspective of the lowlander. According to Charles Withers, 'The Historical Creation of The Scottish Highlands', in Ian Donnachie and Christopher Whatley (eds.), *The Manufacture of Scottish History*, Edinburgh, 1992, pp. 143-156, p.144, the appearance of the Highlands as synonymous with a Gaelic speaking area dates from the Middle Ages when Gaelic, which until this date had also been spoken in the lowlands, retreated to the Highlands.

The question of proscription of Highland dress has been raised only by James Holloway and Fintan Cullen. Cullen deals exclusively with portraits painted after the law had been repealed and the issue is therefore peripheral to him, but Holloway interprets the presence of Highland dress as a sign that the sitter was a trusted member of the British establishment.<sup>18</sup> He states that William Mosman's portrait of *John Campbell of the Bank* (Fig. 9) 'is an indication of Campbell's confidence as a trusted establishment figure that he chose to be portrayed in Highland dress so soon after its proscription', and though it is a plausible argument the question of proscription needs to be considered more thoroughly.<sup>19</sup>

Cullen, in detaching specifically 'Scottish' associations from a number of these portraits, has implicitly recognized their diversity. Cullen indicates Raeburn's portraits of *The MacNab* (Fig. 3), *Sir John Sinclair of Ulster* (Fig. 1) and *Alasdair McDonnell of Glengarry* (Fig. 2) as manifesting Britishness, as the sitters were all involved in raising regiments for the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>20</sup> However, although each of Raeburn's sitters may be associated with a regiment, in none of these examples does the sitter display his military associations through the wearing of military uniform (a point to be discussed in more detail below).

The problem lies in reconstituting these portraits within the culture of those they represented. This is itself extremely problematic due to the cultural complexity of the Highland myth as it was forming during the eighteenth century. The problem is exacerbated by the presence of the artist. Many of these grand and imposing portraits were painted by artists of the first rank, well away from the culture of the Highlands: Ramsay and

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<sup>18</sup> Cullen (1993), p.607.

<sup>19</sup> James Holloway, *Patrons and Painters. Art in Scotland 1650-1760*, EC, Edinburgh, 1989, p.111. Holloway does not offer any evidence in support of this assertion.

<sup>20</sup> Cullen (1993), p.600. Cullen also argues, p.607 that 'the three chieftains offer a military aspect that is a vital part of their public persona.'

Reynolds in London, Kauffman and Batoni in Italy and Raeburn in Edinburgh. However, the sitters were also culturally divided. Educated in the lowlands, England and the Continent, they were also members of the British aristocracy, who travelled on the grand tour, and as MPs, often spent much of their time in London.<sup>21</sup> In order to understand the intention of the sitter, to realize their projected identity, they must necessarily be reinstated with later eighteenth-century Highland culture, as well within the traditions of aristocratic portraiture.

The former project is itself highly complex, as the society was far from homogeneous in its actual and imagined culture over this period. The economic, social and cultural structures of the Highlands changed dramatically during the eighteenth century, and yet these fundamental alterations in Highland life were intertwined with a concomitant mythical creation, the Highland romance or myth. The creation of the Highland romance was, as Womack demonstrates, an event in British history, a process begun after the defeat of Culloden and largely complete by c1810-11. In his view this process was given literary expression in a flurry of publications of this date, most notably Sir Walter Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*. These, he argues, 'both depended upon and confirmed a settled cultural construction of the Highlands as a "romantic country" inhabited by a people whose ancient manners and customs were "peculiarly adapted to poetry."' <sup>22</sup> As part of a British and, Womack argues, imperialistic ideology, the myth of the Highlands as an ancient and romantic country can be regarded as facilitating the adoption of a Highland Scottish national identity.

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<sup>21</sup> The 1609 Statutes of Iona stipulated that the sons of Highland chiefs should be educated in the lowlands, see Robert A. Dodgshon, *From Chiefs to Landlords*, Edinburgh, 1998, p.115.

<sup>22</sup> Womack, pp.1-2. As an event in the history of British ideology, Womack also regards the myth of the Highlands as formed within a British imperialist ideology of the late eighteenth century.



Portraits of men in Highland dress were both part of the creation of this myth, and an expression of it. However, I shall also argue that in the light of dramatic social and economic changes, they are expressive of continuity. These portraits cannot simply be dismissed as portraits of Highland chiefs, dressed in their clan tartan and Scottish national costume. I shall propose rather that these portraits express an essentially aristocratic ethos, and while Highland identity is essential to this image, this should not be confused with either a Scottish or British identity, although it impinges upon them.

These portraits are therefore bound up in a series of complex and interlocking identities, myths and changing economic and cultural circumstances. Quite how these various influences effected the portrayal of Highland aristocrats, and how this portrayal is constructed within the paradigms of British and European traditions of portraiture will now be considered.

The creation of the Highland myth as a subject has received significant scholarly attention, eloquently synthesized by Charles Withers.<sup>23</sup> He maintains that the common understanding that the historical creation of the Scottish Highlands was an eighteenth-century phenomenon ignores two important factors: firstly, the emergence of the Highlands as a distinct region in the Middle Ages, and secondly the Highlander's reactions to the creation of Highland regional identity.<sup>24</sup> Not only did the creation of the Highlands not begin in the eighteenth century, it did not end there either, continuing to develop in the nineteenth century.<sup>25</sup> The twentieth century continued to construct the Highlands through a tourist industry of tartans and clans built upon these earlier creations. The 'Scottish

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<sup>23</sup> Withers (1992), *passim*.

<sup>24</sup> The assertion of an eighteenth-century origin is made by Trevor-Roper. As Withers (1992), pp.143-4 has pointed out, it is a perspective perpetuated by many other writers on this subject.

Highlands' were created by a largely external vision of their culture, and therefore to understand the cultural products that relate to this region, they must be considered as compounds of actuality and myth, before any other questions of interpretation can be addressed.<sup>26</sup>

Current readings of Highland portraits are essentially predicated upon a nineteenth-century vision of Scottish Highland identity. In order to realize the problems of such interpretations it is necessary to understand the basis upon which they were formed. Hugh Trevor-Roper, in his seminal, if contested, article 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland' has argued that the 'creation of an independent Highland tradition, and the imposition of that new tradition, with its outward badges, on the whole Scottish nation, was the work of the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.'<sup>27</sup> He also argues that this process took place in three stages.<sup>28</sup> Firstly, early Scottish history was rewritten, and Irish culture usurped, with the claim that Celtic Scotland was the mother nation, and not Ireland. Secondly, and most importantly for this study, new Highland traditions were created, and then presented as ancient, original and distinctive. Thirdly, these new traditions were offered to, and adopted by, lowland Scotland. In an attempt to

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<sup>25</sup> Scott's Waverley novels are central to this development as was his orchestration of the visit of George IV to Edinburgh in 1822. Nineteenth-century genre painting and the work of Sir Edwin Landseer in particular also promoted this Scottish Highland image.

<sup>26</sup> Womack, p.1.

<sup>27</sup> Trevor-Roper, *passim*. Withers (1992), p.150 takes a balanced view of Trevor-Roper's contributions, describing his analysis as 'by turns mischievous and enlightening.' He provides a reasoned analysis of some of the problems encountered in this article by Trevor-Roper, while acknowledging that some of his arguments about the origins of the Scottish nation are untenable, he acknowledges that Trevor-Roper's discussion of the kilt is important in the light of the other creations of the Highland myth. However, other writers seem to misrepresent Trevor-Roper's arguments, for example David McCrone in *Understanding Scotland. The Sociology of a Stateless Nation*, London, 1992, p.181. McCrone describes Trevor-Roper's article as a 'knock-about piece' and implies that Trevor-Roper argued that 'Tartanry' was invented by an Englishman, even though the quotation used by McCrone makes it clear that Trevor-Roper's argument referred specifically to the kilt alone. However, McCrone does find agreement with Trevor-Roper with regard the origin of 'clan tartan' see McCrone, p.182 and Trevor-Roper, p.30. The strength of feeling expressed by McCrone demonstrates both the historical and political complexity of these arguments.

<sup>28</sup> Trevor-Roper, p.16.

unravel the myth of the Highlands through looking at the history of its creation and that of its symbols, in particular the kilt, tartan and Ossian, Trevor-Roper's article has been central to the modern historical debate on both the Highland myth and Scottish national identity.<sup>29</sup>

The first stage in the development of a Highland tradition, as claimed by Trevor-Roper, was the assertion that the origins of the Scottish nation lay not in Ireland, but in Celtic Scotland.<sup>30</sup> It was an old legend that had been discredited in 1729, but which was reasserted first in 1738, then more decisively in the 1760s through the 'translation' of the poems of Ossian by James Macpherson, and the historical context for the poems provided by the Rev. John Macpherson.<sup>31</sup> Trevor-Roper claims that the second phase, that which is of most concern here, involved the establishment of new traditions founded upon a peculiarity of dress, in particular the kilt and 'clan tartans'.<sup>32</sup> Although Trevor-Roper's claim for the importance of the symbols of this new tradition may be overstated, his assessment of the origin of these signs - that the kilt was invented sometime after 1727, and certainly before 1745, and that 'clan tartans' were the products of enterprising tartan manufacturers around 1820 - although the subject of some controversy, is now generally accepted.<sup>33</sup> The third stage, the adoption of these new signs by lowland Scots, began in 1778 with the formation of the Highland Society of London, and their successful appeal for the repeal of the proscription of Highland dress in Scotland; this point appears to find general agreement amongst historians.<sup>34</sup> This latter process did not fully develop until the early nineteenth century when Scott's Waverley novels, which romanticized Highland life, spread Scottish Highland identity across Europe.

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<sup>29</sup> See Withers (1992), *passim*.

<sup>30</sup> Trevor-Roper, p.16.

<sup>31</sup> Trevor-Roper, p.17.

<sup>32</sup> Trevor-Roper, p.18.

<sup>33</sup> Withers (1992), p.150, has pointed out that Trevor-Roper may overstate the importance of these signs.

However, despite the popularity of the Highland image in the identification of Scotland during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Colin Kidd notes that this identity has not been politically central. Although a Gaelic inspired romantic nationalism held a place in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Scottish nationalism, Kidd argues, 'the Highland tradition was at best ideologically peripheral, and rather than laying the foundations for Gaelic inspired Scottish romantic nationalism, it emasculated Scottish nationalistic urges through cultural sublimation.'<sup>35</sup> If this third stage in the creation of the Highland myth has been peripheral to nationalist politics, the previous stages in its creation have been central to British politics, in the removal of the Jacobite threat, and the creation of a British identity that encompassed this remote and culturally distinctive part of the nation.

In the creation of the myth, it is possible to identify two central strands in the later eighteenth century; the poems of Ossian and the socio-political idea of Improvement. In addition, changes in aesthetics and accessibility played important contributory roles. As has already been discussed, Improvement was a wide encompassing term for a process that was political in motivation, had imperialist overtones and resulted in profound economic, cultural and social effects in the Highlands.<sup>36</sup> The importance of Improvement to questions of national identity is located in its position as the dominant theme in British discourse concerning the Highlands.<sup>37</sup> Peter Womack has argued that the signification of the term, with regard to the Highlands, was threefold: firstly the region was to yield a better return on capital, secondly it was to become very generally a 'better place', and finally that these two

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<sup>34</sup> Trevor-Roper, p.26 and Withers (1992), p.150-151.

<sup>35</sup> Colin Kidd, 'Teutonist Ethnology and Scottish Nationalist Inhibition, 1780-1880.' *The Scottish Historical Review*, Volume LXXIV, 1, No.197, April 1995, pp.45-68, p.47.

<sup>36</sup> See chapter one.

<sup>37</sup> The centrality of the discourse of Improvement is implicit in many texts, for example Phillipson and Mitchison.

definitions were substantially identical.<sup>38</sup> Further, in his research into the Highland myth Womack has also recognized its relationship to the politics of national identity.<sup>39</sup> Colin Kidd has perceptively visualised the myth, proffering the image of 'an invented cult of tartanry with sentimental-Jacobite overtones [which] functioned as a traditionalist and communitarian fig-leaf for the whiggish political economy which underlay the Highland Clearances.'<sup>40</sup>

While Improvement can be regarded as part of the economic actuality of the development of the Highlands that contributed towards its changing identity, the most significant mythical contribution to the development of the Highland myth during the eighteenth century were the poems of Ossian 'translated' by James MacPherson. Just as the pageant of 1822 brought the imaginative creation of the Highlands into stunning realization, the poems of Ossian can be similarly regarded as the imaginative re-formation of aspects of Highland culture for a wider audience, and one which played a vital role in the creation of the myth.

Fiona Stafford has written extensively on these poems and on the social and cultural politics which surrounded their publication in the 1760s.<sup>41</sup> The poems can be regarded as one of the most important means by which Highland or Gaelic could be reconciled with lowland Scottish identity, as both the products of this problematic relationship and a force for reconciling it.<sup>42</sup> Macpherson's translations were based upon traditional Gaelic sources,

<sup>38</sup> Womack, p.3.

<sup>39</sup> Womack, p.2 points out the significance of this discourse in his investigation into the construction of the Highland myth.

<sup>40</sup> Colin Kidd, 'The Rehabilitation of Scottish Jacobitism', *The Scottish Historical Review*, Volume LXXVII, 1, No.203, April 1998, pp.58-76, p.58.

<sup>41</sup> Most extensively in Fiona J. Stafford, *The Sublime Savage. A Study of James Macpherson and the Poems of Ossian*, Edinburgh, 1988. See also Gaskill (1996) (ed.), Howard Gaskill (ed.) *Ossian Revisited*, Edinburgh, 1991 and Ronald Meek, *Social science and the Ignoble Savage*, Cambridge, 1976.

<sup>42</sup> Fiona Stafford, 'The Ossianic Poems of James Macpherson', in Gaskill (1996), pp.v-xxi, p.viii.

but their publication in English, for a lowland audience, involved much more than a simple linguistic translation. Gaelic culture was oral by tradition, and based in small rural communities; lowland culture was reliant upon print and was increasingly urban. Therefore these poems can be seen, in the context of eighteenth-century Scottish history, as 'a sophisticated attempt to mediate between two apparently irreconcilable cultures.'<sup>43</sup> Thus these poems are implicitly subject to the complexities of the internal and external perspectives discussed earlier in this chapter, the internal, and largely Gaelic, Highland culture, and the externally constructed Highland myth.<sup>44</sup>

The poems of Ossian, based upon a number of traditional Gaelic poems, 'translated' for an external readership, offer a comparable cultural construction to Highland portraits. In the portrait, the visual image of the Highlander has been translated into a lowland cultural form of the heroic male portrait. Whether this visual image accords with the model of the Highlander that was formed from Ossian by the Scottish literati - as valiant and generous, as a symbol of national pride and an antidote to modern selfishness - remains to be seen.<sup>45</sup>

It is significant that pictorial images of these poems, for example Charles Reuben Ryley's *Oscar bringing back Annir's Daughter* of 1785 (Fig. 15), figured the characters in

<sup>43</sup> Stafford, (Gaskill, 1996) p.x, points out that they were produced in the context of systematic destruction of Gaelic culture, and that Macpherson's effort to collect old heroic poetry can be seen as, in part, an attempt to repair some of the damage sustained in the wake of the Jacobite rising.

<sup>44</sup> It is tempting if problematic to conflate Highland and Gaelic culture. Withers (1992) p.144, argues that although the Highlands and Highlander became synonymous with the Gaelic speaking area or Gaidhealtachd, for the Gael, now or in the past, the term Gaidhealtachd does not directly translate as the Highlands.

<sup>45</sup> John Dwyer argues that Hugh Blair's 'Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian' was but one of a number of attempts to construct such a model. John Dwyer 'The Caledonian Mercury and Scottish National Culture, 1763-1801.' *Journal of History and Politics*, 1989, Vol.7, pp.147-69, p.150. See also John Dwyer 'The Melancholy Savage: Text and Context in the Poems of Ossian' in Gaskill (1991), pp.164-206, in particular p.169.

the long flowing robes of Homeric visual tradition.<sup>46</sup> This image, which emphasized both the antiquity of the poems and their Homeric associations, would, therefore, satisfactorily accommodate them within the genre of history painting.<sup>47</sup> The very particular costume of the Highlander, which had often negative associations, would have been unsuitable in history painting, which permitted the distinguishing details of dress only if they facilitated the viewer's intellectual understanding of the image.<sup>48</sup> So although the poems of Ossian played an important part in the image of the Highlander in late eighteenth-century Scotland, their influence upon visual imagery seems not to have been directly relevant to the concomitant pictorial development of the Highlander.<sup>49</sup>

Interpreted as an emotional, feeling and sensitive society, the Gaelic past offered by Ossian to eighteenth-century readers formed part of the perceptual habilitation of the Highlander in the eyes of lowlanders.<sup>50</sup> It was an habilitation that enabled the image of the Highlander to pass from the savage, unfeeling, lazy and war-like individual, based within an economically backward and feudal society, to something that could be associated, in the

<sup>46</sup> While the poems of Ossian and associated paintings and prints undoubtedly belong to the Celtic revival, Smiles, pp.46-74, has argued that it was rare for heroic Ossianic subjects to be conjoined with the megalithic remains of prehistoric imagery as may be found in Thomas Jones's, *The Bard* (National Museum of Wales, 1774), a rare example of this being Elizabeth Harvey's *Malvina Lamenting the Death of Oscar* (1806, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris).

<sup>47</sup> For pictorial images of the poems of Ossian see Okun. For a discussion of the Europe wide tradition of the image of antiquity in general, and the Bard in particular, see Smiles, especially chapters two and three.

<sup>48</sup> Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, Robert R. Wark (ed.), New Haven and London, 1975, Discourse IV, p.58, 'And as in the conception of this ideal picture, the mind does not enter into the minute peculiarities of the dress, furniture or scene of action; so when the Painter comes to represent it, he contrives those little necessary concomitant circumstances in such a manner, that they shall strike the spectator no more than they did himself in his first conception of the story.'

<sup>49</sup> Smiles, p.67. In pictorial representations of Ossian historic license was occasionally taken, as for example in two paintings exhibited by James Barralet in 1778 *The Fall of Agandecca* and *Fainasollis, Borbar and Fingal* (both surviving as prints by James Parker and illustrated in Smiles). In the first a medieval castle appears, and in the second kilts and bonnets are worn by the ancient inhabitants of the Highlands, which Smiles argues may have been an attempt by the artist to connect contemporary Highlanders to their remote ancestors.

<sup>50</sup> That Ossian appeared to fit so well within the eighteenth-century culture of sensibility was of course due to their translation for an eighteenth-century audience, a translation which appreciated the appeal of these qualities to Scotland's literati and a broader international audience. For the sentimental context of Ossian and the reactions of Scottish literati see Dwyer (Gaskill, 1991), pp166-171.

minds of the British, with values recognizable as their own. It was a process largely derived from external influences on the Highlands: Improvement, education, tourism, the army and religion.<sup>51</sup>

The creation of the Highland myth was facilitated both by loss and discovery. The loss, or change, in Highland life was brought about in part from outside, by the political desire to make the Highlands an inclusive part of Britain, and thus to remove any possible future threat from Jacobitism; and in part from within, from the desire of Highland landowners to participate in lowland culture. The process of discovery, which also involved the imposition of external political, cultural and aesthetic values, was achieved through a process of encounter and subsequent interpretation, within a culturally external framework. In particular, the discovery of the Highlands took place within the imaginative covers of travellers' accounts, in the picturesque tours of the landscape and its inhabitants, and finally within the aesthetics of the sublime.

The discovery, or opening up, of the Highlands, which occurred during the second half of the eighteenth century, was the direct result of government policy. The first initiative, a response to the Jacobite rising of 1715, was the programme of road building undertaken by General Wade's forces, between 1725 and 1738. This was an attempt to make the Highlands more accessible to government troops, in case of a future rebellion, but it also improved movement for travellers and Highlanders. The region was additionally brought to prominence precisely because of the rebellions of 1715 and 1745. Histories of the 'Forty-Five were published from 1746, and travellers' accounts of the Highlands grew in popularity after Johnson and Boswell published separate accounts of their joint tour;

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<sup>51</sup> The process of the habilitation of the Highlands into British culture is considered by Robert Clyde, *From Rebel to Hero The Image of the Highlander, 1745-1830*, East Lothian, 1995. This book covers related ground



Johnson in 1775 and Boswell 1786.<sup>52</sup> In 1776 William Gilpin undertook a picturesque tour in Scotland, travelling as far into the Highlands as Blair Atholl.<sup>53</sup> Literary accounts of the region were, at the beginning of the century, poetical rather than prosaic, and testify to it as perceived as remote and strange.<sup>54</sup> Although the earliest pictorial representations of the region by Paul Sandby, published in the *Virtuosi's Museum* in 1778, followed the topographical landscape tradition, the sense of awe and wonderment at the natural geological formations of the area can be found in prints of Fingal's Cave, the earliest produced by one of the draughtsmen who accompanied Joseph Banks to the Island of Staffa in 1772. As Charlotte Klonk has observed, these prints emphasize the regularity and overwhelming size of this natural phenomenon, adding to the sense of wonder at nature contained in Banks' published account.<sup>55</sup>

While the numerous published travel accounts of the Highlands were central to the increased public familiarity with this region, they must also be considered within the context of the general interest in touring witnessed in the later eighteenth century.<sup>56</sup> The earliest published account was Martin Martin's *Description of the Western Isles of Scotland* of 1703, while Pennant's tour, published in 1769, included a description of Culloden. Johnson and Boswell's tour of 1773, published as *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland and Journal of*

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to Womack, although not so successfully.

<sup>52</sup> Samuel Johnson, *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland*, 1775 and James Boswell, *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson LL.D.*, 1786. There are a number of modern editions of these texts.

<sup>53</sup> William Gilpin, *Observations Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty: Made in the Year 1776, on Several Parts of Great Britain, particularly in the High-lands of Scotland*, 2 vols., London, 1789.

<sup>54</sup> This point is made by Leah Leneman 'A New Role for a Lost Cause, Lowland Romanticisation of the Jacobite Highlander', in Leah Leneman (ed.) *Perspectives in Scottish Social History. Essays in Honour of Rosalind Mitchison*, Aberdeen, 1988, pp.107-124, p.108.

<sup>55</sup> Published in Thomas Pennant's *A Tour in Scotland, and Voyage to the Hebrides* 1776 edition. Charlotte Klonk, *Science and the Perception of Nature*, London & New Haven, 1996, for the picturesque tour in Scotland see pp. 70-74, for Staffa, pp.74-76.

<sup>56</sup> Details of published travel journals to the Highlands can be found in Womack, pp.61-86 and Clyde, pp.97-115. For a general introduction to eighteenth-century travel literature see Esther Moir, *The Discovery of Britain: The English Tourists 1540-1840*, London, 1964.

*a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson LL.D.*, was already concerned with the loss of the 'traditional' life of the Highlands. Pennant, in his *A Tour in Scotland*, noted the juxtaposition of picturesque and sublime landscapes, in particular at Loch Lomond where the contrasting man-made landscape of the fertile land to the south was juxtaposed with wild nature in the barren mountains to the north. This allusion to *concordia discors* became a standard observation for tourists to the Highlands.<sup>57</sup>

The role of literature and poetry in the changing image of the Highlands was therefore of central importance. However, just as the Highlands were both created and reflected in literature, so too were they both created and represented in painting, and in particular in the portraits of its chiefs dressed in their distinctive tartan clothes. The portraits of *Norman, 22<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Macleod* (Fig. 5) by Ramsay, *Sir Alexander Macdonald of Sleat* (Fig. 10) by an unidentified artist, and Raeburn's *Alastair Macdonell of Glengarry* (Fig. 2) offer excellent examples of such paintings.

The sitter in each of the portraits under consideration wears Highland dress. This dress both identifies them with a particular region and origin, and distinguishes them from the tradition of European portraiture of which they, in other ways, are such a conventional part. However, this dress is also implicitly problematic.

We have already referred to the historiography of Highland dress in relation to two of its most important signifiers in the Highland myth, the kilt and clan tartan, for both popular and art-historical texts anachronistically refer to sitters dressed in clan tartan, or national costume.<sup>58</sup> If eighteenth-century portraits are seen from the perspective of the

<sup>57</sup> Womack, p.63.

<sup>58</sup> J. Telfer Dunbar *History of Highland Dress*, London, 1962, 1979, p.10, notes that there is no evidence for clan tartans before or during the 'Forty-Five'. The proscription of Highland dress in Scotland between 1746 and 1782, with the exception of the military, make the existence of clan tartans before this latter date highly improbable.

nineteenth, our understanding of them becomes extremely untrustworthy. A nineteenth-century concept of clan tartans would impose misleading readings of social affiliation, or rejection, onto these portraits. Given a proper understanding of the details of the dress and its history, it is possible to move away from these false generalizations, and in doing so to remove some of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Highland myth that obscures the view to its contemporary eighteenth-century manifestation.

The historiography of Highland dress has been discussed in great depth by J. Telfer Dunbar whose work, together with that of Hugh Trevor-Roper and Hugh Cheape, has provided a clear picture of its history.<sup>59</sup> However, its history is obscured by the fact that not only are written or visual accounts of pre-eighteenth-century dress rare, due to the oral basis of Gaelic culture and the remoteness of the Highlands, but also because as with the rest of Highland culture, Highland dress is overlain with the myths and laws of an external and imposed culture. Following the 'Forty-Five the British government, and the Scottish Whig establishment, set about dismantling all that was distinctive about Highland culture - agricultural systems, law, language, religion, education and dress.<sup>60</sup> Heritable Jurisdictions were abolished in 1747, removing the inherited legal powers of Highland landowners, while the Annexing Act of 1752 sought to apply the profits of the forfeited estates of the 'Forty-Five, 'for the better civilizing and improving the Highlands of Scotland; and preventing disorders there in the future.'<sup>61</sup> The mission of the Board of Commissioners for the Annexed Estates was both economic and political, promoting a wide range of improvements

<sup>59</sup>Dunbar, *passim*; Trevor-Roper, *passim*; Hugh Cheape, *Tartan: The Highland Habit*, National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1991, *passim*. Cullen (1993), p.607 refers to clans' setts in the early nineteenth century, without recognising the problems surrounding this assumption.

<sup>60</sup> A good general account of governmental measures in the Highlands can be found in Lynch, pp.323-339 and pp.362-377. Another, though less satisfactory, account of some of the changes can be found in Clyde. The economic impact of these changes is discussed most fully in A.J. Youngson, *After the 'Forty-Five*, Edinburgh, 1973, while social and economic change over a broader period is discussed in Dodgshon.

that included good government, industry and manufactures, new methods of agriculture, the construction of a new network of communications and the eradication of Roman Catholicism and non-juring Episcopacy from the estates.<sup>62</sup> A report to the commissioners by Captain John Forbes, factor of the annexed Lovat and Cromartie estates, identified those measures needed to improve the area of Coigach. These included the erection of a church, or the settlement of an itinerant preacher in the area to instruct the people and for 'inculcating Loyalty, Industry and Obedience to the Laws.' Two spinning schools were recommended as were two English schools because 'the English Language is of the greatest Consequence.'<sup>63</sup>

From the 1 August 1747 the Disarming Act ensured that

no Man or Boy, within that Part of Great Britain called Scotland, other than Such as shall be employed as Officers and Soldiers in His Majesty's Forces, shall, on any Pretence whatsoever, wear or put on the Clothes commonly called Highland clothes (that is to say) the Plaid, Philebeg, or little Kilt, Trowse, Shoulder Belts, or any Part whatsoever of what peculiarly belongs to the Highland Garb; and that no tartan, or party-coloured Plaid or stuff shall be used for Great Coats, or for Upper Coats.

The punishment was severe, six months or more imprisonment, and transportation if convicted of a second offence.<sup>64</sup> The effectiveness of this regulation was noted by Dr Johnson who observed that the proscription law was universally obeyed.<sup>65</sup>

Although there is no need to detail the development of Highland dress from a tunic and plaid or cloak, into the modern dress of kilt, military style jacket, sporran and so forth, it is worth briefly outlining the alterations to Highland dress in the eighteenth century by reiterating its basic development.<sup>66</sup> At the beginning of the eighteenth century Edward

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<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Clyde, p.22.

<sup>62</sup> Clyde, p.22.

<sup>63</sup> Quoted in Clyde, p.22.

<sup>64</sup> Quoted in full in Dunbar, p.3.

<sup>65</sup> Johnson, p.69.

<sup>66</sup> See Trevor-Roper and Dunbar.

Burt, who was serving under General Wade in the Highlands, described how men wore the plaid: 'set in folds and girt around the waist to make a short petticoat that reaches half-way down the thigh, and the rest is brought over the shoulders and then fastened before... so that they make pretty near the appearance of the poor women in London when they bring their gowns over to shelter them from the rain.'<sup>67</sup> A 1743 set of engravings published by Vandergucht provides a clear illustration of the way in which the plaid was worn (Fig. 16). However, this was not the garb of members of the aristocracy. As Sir John Sinclair of Ulster discovered, members of the Highland's landed elite wore trews, and as Trevor-Roper has noted, trews could only be worn out of doors in the Highlands by men with attendants to protect or carry them.<sup>68</sup> There is considerable pictorial evidence, including Allan Ramsay's portraits of the *Norman 22<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Macleod* (Fig. 5) of 1747/8, that this dress remained part of the Highland dress of the elite.

Trevor-Roper has established that the kilt, or philibeg, was invented in the first half of the eighteenth century. It was derived from the belted plaid, in which a single piece of cloth, or plaid, was pleated around the waist, secured by a belt and then dressed over the upper body, by separating the skirt from the plaid to form two distinct pieces of clothing.<sup>69</sup>

From Dunbar and Trevor-Roper we learn that there was no distinction between the Highland dress worn in civilian life and that worn by fighting men, before proscription. A military report of 1709 gives an early description of the dress of the Highland Independent Companies. 'Your Commissioners observe there is a peculiar clothing for the three Highland

<sup>67</sup> Quoted in Trevor-Roper, p.20.

<sup>68</sup> Trews were a combination of breeches and stockings, Trevor-Roper, p.19.

<sup>69</sup> It was invented sometime after 1726 and was established by 1746. Trevor-Roper, pp.21-22, validates his account with reference to eighteenth-century accounts of this invention. The first portrait containing the kilt is thought to be that of *Alasdair Ruadh Macdonell* (private collection) in which a servant, rather than the aristocratic young Glengarry, wears the kilt (illustrated in Dunbar).

Companies in North Britain, not at all military but like the clothing of the natives there.'<sup>70</sup> Further, an account by a mounted volunteer in Cumberland's army during the battle of Culloden and published as *Compleat History of the Rebellion* in 1758, described the pursuit of a Highlander who could not be distinguished as friend or foe as he was not wearing a bonnet. He wrote, 'I only mention this to show how we distinguished our loyal clans from the Rebels; they being dress'd and equipp'd all in one Way, except the Bonnet.'<sup>71</sup> As the forthcoming discussion of military portraits will illustrate, this uniformity appears to have been lost during proscription.

Highland dress was related to social status, and tartan to fashion rather than clan loyalty, with its choice depending on personal taste and availability.<sup>72</sup> This is clearly evident in Highland portraits where, as Trevor-Roper has observed, tartan setts are often numerous.<sup>73</sup> The double portrait of *Sir James Macdonald and Sir Alexander Macdonald of Sleat* as children (Fig. 17) depicts the future 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Barts dressed respectively in tartan jacket, long tartan waistcoat and kilt, and tartan gartered trews and a tartan jacket. Dunbar has noted that in this portrait there are four different patterns, none of them conforming to the present 'clan' tartan.<sup>74</sup> In an earlier series of portraits painted by Richard Waitt of members of the clan Grant, including family, kinsmen and members of the chief of Grant's retinue, the sitters all wear different tartans. *Richard Cummine, the Piper of the Laird of*

<sup>70</sup> Quoted in Dunbar, p.155.

<sup>71</sup> Quoted in Dunbar, p.164. The Jacobite and Highland troops were distinguished by a mark on the bonnet: troops loyal to the government wore a red or yellow cross or ribbon, those loyal to the Stuart cause wore a white cockade. Dunbar, p.166, notes that the first representation of a Highlander in the uniform of a British regiment can be found in *A Representation of the Clothing of His Majesty's Household and all the Forces upon the Establishments of Great Britain and Ireland* published in 1742. The soldier is described by Dunbar as wearing a red jacket without lace, white buttons... He is wearing a blue bonnet... The hose are diced by diagonal stripes red and black edging, the belted plaid is shown bunched up on the hips and fastened to the left shoulder.

<sup>72</sup> See also Trevor-Roper, p.23, Dunbar, p.78.

<sup>73</sup> Trevor-Roper, p.23.

<sup>74</sup> Dunbar, p.78.

*Grant* (Fig. 18), *Alastair Grant Mohr, the Champion of the Laird of Grant* (Fig. 19) and *Patrick Grant of Milltown, Hereditary Standard Bearer to the Chief of Grant* (Fig. 20).<sup>75</sup>

This example is significant, for although the tartan setts worn do not express any continuity or unity, the series is itself an expression of just that.<sup>76</sup> In 1713 Waitt was commissioned to paint the chief of the clan, Alexander and his brother Colonel Lewis Grant; soon after he painted Alexander's sister Margaret and another brother, George. Grant then commissioned a series of portraits of loyal supporters and kinsmen and two full length portraits of his musician and champion. This series of portraits, as James Holloway has pointed out, is unique. For although parallels can be found in dynastic royal portraiture, portraits of what can be described as a court and retinue of an individual leader were unprecedented in the Highlands and related directly to the unique social structure found there.<sup>77</sup>

Highland portraits exemplified the culture of their sitters, both by displaying the Highland dress and tartan identified with the Highlands, and communicating their position within the British aristocracy through the medium, artist and scale. Their place within the traditions of portraiture will now be considered.

Tartan, subject to fashion, itself became an object of fashion. In 1789 the Prince of Wales (the future George IV), purchased 'a rich embroidered Scotch Bonnet' and a 'Belted kilt, Plaid Coat, Waistcoat' which he wore at a masquerade ball in the same month.<sup>78</sup> Betsy Sheridan, who attended the ball at Mrs Sturt's House at Hammersmith, recorded in her diary that 'About One the Princes arrived all dressed as Highland Chiefs; nothing could be more

<sup>75</sup> Dunbar, p.78 and Trevor-Roper p.23. Holloway (1989), p.71, describes them as 'similar'.

<sup>76</sup> The expression of dynastic unity is a common and vital function of family portraits. See Pointon (1993), pp.159-177.

<sup>77</sup> Holloway (1989), pp.69-72.

elegant or becoming than their dress.'<sup>79</sup> That the Prince of Wales wore Highland costume to a masquerade is significant to understanding both the perception of the dress in England, and its visual significance in terms of fashionable portraiture.

Contemporary reports of masquerades, and the work of Terry Castle, point to the masquerade as both a social gathering and cultural sign. Castle's research into the costumes worn at these 'promiscuous gatherings' has linked them with imperial expansion and notions of otherness; she argues that the costumes may be seen as a 'displacement of imperialist fantasy and an act of homage to otherness.'<sup>80</sup> Costumes worn at English masquerades were drawn from Continental traditions, characters from the *Commedia dell'Arte* and religious costumes from the 'parodia sacra' of Catholic carnivals.<sup>81</sup> The most popular costumes were those that can be described as foreign or exotic: Polish, Patagonian, Spanish, and the most popular of this category, any costume which evoked the Orient. Highland costume also fits within this category.<sup>82</sup> The preference for otherness is of course in keeping with the spirit of the masquerade, but, as Castle has argued, the popularity of national and ethnic costumes also coincided with imperialist expansion. An imperialist view of the Highlands has already been discussed, therefore the presence of an imperialist vision towards this dress, in its formation as a masquerade costume, is not unexpected (Fig. 22). If Highland dress could

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<sup>78</sup> Ribeiro, p.231, who also records that the Prince ordered a 'Tartan masquerade Jacket, lin'd with green Sarsnet, green velvet Cuffs and collar, and 30 open work'd and studded Silver Buttons' in 1806.

<sup>79</sup> Ribeiro references this diary, p.231, fn.124. *Betsy Sheridan's Journal*, William LeFanu (ed.), London, 1960.

<sup>80</sup> Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization. The Carnavalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Fiction*, London, 1986, pp.2 & 60-61. *The Town and Country Magazine*, February 1773, pp.100-101 contains an account of two masquerades. 1800 people attended a masquerade at the Pantheon on 18 February, the anonymous writer describing it as 'numerous and brilliant.' Many different masks were recorded including Turkish, 'Polenese', Dutch, French, Grecian, and Chinese characters. Saint David on a goat, Diana, three Sybils and Merlin were some of the more elevated others, but watchmen, a Newmarket jockey, a procuress, a coachman, footman and waggoner were all represented. However, it is interesting to note that the many dukes, duchesses, lords and ladies who attended were dressed mainly as dominos.

<sup>81</sup> Castle, p.15.

<sup>82</sup> Castle p.60.



be categorized in the popular imagination as otherness, and comparable with, for example, Turkish or Polish national costume, then it is also necessary to consider at least some of the portraits of Highlanders in these terms.<sup>83</sup>

There is no English equivalent of Highland dress and therefore there are no equivalent portraits of Englishmen dressed in either regional or national costume. England was emblemized by John Bull, and Britain personified as Britannia, but the members of the English aristocracy and ruling classes who afforded the luxury of a full or half length portrait were portrayed as gentlemen, in a type of portraiture that could be recognized across Europe. Costume or dress did not differentiate the gentlemen and gentlewomen of Europe by country or region, although small details may have been recognized as particular to different regions, as the use of ribbons on female dresses was regarded in the eighteenth century as particularly Polish, and fashions were labelled as 'London' or 'Paris', after the fashion centres of Europe.<sup>84</sup> François Boucher argues that, with the exception of France after the fall of the monarchy, 'court costume' persisted, although it changed, in London, Moscow, Naples and across Europe.<sup>85</sup> Boucher has found only one circumstance in which a particular costume was reserved for one category of citizens, or was dictated by their political function.<sup>86</sup>

Highland dress, in portraiture, then, is significant because it differentiates the sitter as another, as outside of the elite body of the British public as represented in grand full-length

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<sup>83</sup> It may be argued that as there was no English national costume, the view that Polish, Turkish or Highland masquerade costume was regarded as other is difficult to sustain. However, given the nature of the masquerade, in which the self is hidden under the guise of an unrelated other, the absence of any English national identity does not seem of great significance as there were numerous other forms of self-identification that could be contrasted.

<sup>84</sup> For English and French fashions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries see Ribeiro, *passim*.

<sup>85</sup> Boucher, p.335.

<sup>86</sup> Boucher, p.335. The only example Boucher could locate was the costume prescribed by royal decree for the Third Estate for the 1789 *Etats-Généraux*, it consisted of the legal costume of short black cloak, black breeches and an unbraided, buttonless toque.

portraits, and which significantly sought an homogeneous identification through the representation of certain virtues. The bright, bold and large full-length form chosen by Highland chiefs is an act of display that seeks to represent independence from the body of aristocratic males to whom this portrait type belongs. These portraits hold an uncomfortable position within a history of British and Continental portraiture, politically acceptable in a location in which they represented otherness, and yet politically subversive in a culture to which they belonged. They were also painted by artists who, through their prices and exclusivity, announced the sitters as members of a European aristocracy, and whose portraits sought to reinforce the sitters' position within this established norm.

Representation of otherness in this type of grand portraiture was not confined to Highland portraits, though there is a significant difference between these and other representations. While sitters normally assume a character to emphasize particular aspects of the self, Highland portraits represent an aspect of the sitter's own identity. The masquerade ball offered the possibility of representing oneself as other, of playing a role. This idea of role playing, of taking on another's identity has strong affiliations with the theatre, and the innovations of Garrick originally in *Richard III*, and which we more generally witness in the proliferation of portraits of actors in their roles.<sup>87</sup> Role-playing is particularly prominent in female portraiture. In many of Reynolds's portraits, the sitter also takes on a role that enhances an aspect of their personality or, more often, their virtues or position.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>87</sup> There is much literature on Garrick and realistic acting, see for example Shearer West, *The Image of the actor. Verbal and Visual Representation in the Age of Garrick and Kemble*, London, 1991, especially pp.58-68.

<sup>88</sup> The normal qualities assigned a woman in portraiture were their abilities as a wife or mother, or occasionally a dutiful daughter. In some of Reynolds's paintings these three identities were expressed with great variety and complexity through allegory, for example *Mrs Hale as Euphrosyne* of 1768 or *Lady Sarah Bunbury Sacrificing to the Graces* of 1765. In Reynolds's portraits the woman is not personified, but allegorized and this is

In a small number of portraits the sitter pulls on the robes of another, embracing them fully as part of their own identity. Mrs Mary Wortley Montague added a pictorial layering of exotic otherness to her persona when she was painted in Turkish style dress by Jonathan Richardson c1725. Wife of the British Ambassador for Turkey, her letters provoked a fashion for all things Turkish.<sup>89</sup> Although this dress can be said to be entirely appropriate for a woman in her position and as a leader of fashion, her portrayal in this form of national type dress, that was distinctly and deliberately chosen as other and exotic, is extremely unusual in portraiture. Although it may be construed as fashion, the otherness of it marks it as significant.

To differentiate oneself from the norm of dress or manners was acceptable and quite normal within the boundaries of the masquerade. To do this in a portrait that would have been seen by peers as well as close family transcends this convention, and is therefore of particular significance so early in the century. Reynolds does not do this: he enhances the sitter's position within society. Therefore, in light of the conventions of portraiture and the norms of uniform, armour or toga type dress, found in military portraits, portraits of men clothed in Highland dress must have looked to an eighteenth-century audience like expressions of a different and distinct culture and identity, in contrast to the still overwhelming desire in portraiture to mark oneself as belonging.<sup>90</sup> Within a history of

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significant as she is therefore not represented as other, but as herself in which certain chosen aspects of her identity are emphasized through another. For the Montgomery sisters (the three graces) see E. H. Gombrich, 'Reynolds's theory and the practice of Imitation', *Burlington Magazine*, LXXX, February 1942, pp.40-45. For a discussion of Reynolds's female allegorical portraits see Marcia Pointon, *Strategies for Showing. Women, possession, and representation in English visual culture, 1665-1800*, Oxford, 1997, pp.173-227. Role playing is also discussed by Edgar Wind in *Hume and the Heroic Portrait*, Oxford, 1986.

<sup>89</sup> Jonathan Richardson, *Mrs Mary Wortley Montague* (c1725, oil on canvas, 94 x 57cm, Earl of Harrowby). A detailed discussion of this portrait and Wortley Montague is found in Pointon (1993), pp.141-157.

<sup>90</sup> This desire, pressing throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, lessened in the latter half of that century and was overturned in the nineteenth as part of the romantic movement. It may be exemplified for the eighteenth century by Kneller's Kit-cat portraits, see David H. Solkin, *Painting for Money*, New Haven & London, 1992, pp.27-47.

eighteenth-century portraiture Highland portraits are an anomaly; they stand outside convention in what they represent - an identity that is their own but implicitly other.

Nonetheless, to define the significance of Highland portraits as paintings is not to provide a broad cultural and historical understanding of the image. This requires an approach which takes into account both external and internal views of the Highlands. The following account will attempt to place these portraits within their cultural and historical setting, bearing in mind that the Highlands cannot be simply hived off from the rest of Britain as another and separate culture. They were opening up: not only did tourists from the South visit them, but Highland landowners also spent an increasing amount of time and money outside of their Highland estates, an expenditure which included having their portraits painted in London or while on the Grand Tour.

The common assumption that portraits of men in Highland dress have military connections originated in the eighteenth century. As we saw, until the period of proscription, civilian Highland dress was indistinguishable from military Highland dress and would have been recognized as such, for Highlanders traded with the lowlands. However, the encounters that caught the English popular imagination were largely military: the mutiny of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiment (Black Watch) in England over terms of enlistment, and even more memorably the 'Forty-Five when the Stuart supporters marched as far as Derby.<sup>91</sup> These physical encounters served to popularize the image of the Highlander as militaristic, at the same time as the construction of this stereotype was also taking place through literature and British government policy.

Allan Macinnes has observed that the clan was regarded as a naturally military society that both threatened constitutional liberties and impeded the progress of commerce

and civility.<sup>92</sup> However, Macinnes argues that this militarism can be overplayed, and that from the seventeenth century there was no longer a military caste within the clans.<sup>93</sup> In addition, it has been pointed out that the clans' fighting men were fairly exclusive and limited in number, usually drawn from the younger of the chief's close kin, and the younger members of the leading cadet families.<sup>94</sup> This point is significant as those portraits which have been discussed in military terms are of clan chiefs, rather than members of these groups who might traditionally have formed the dedicated military section of the clan. Moreover, this retinue of fighting men, which was detached from the norm of farming within this society, was part of chiefly display. This finds visual expression in the 1714 series of portraits painted by Richard Waitt of members of the clan Grant. (Figs. 18, 19 & 20).<sup>95</sup>

The association of the Highlands with militarism in the eighteenth century was a perception strengthened in the popular imagination through the Jacobite risings, precisely when, due to the various Disarming Acts, its importance was actually decreasing. The militaristic view of the Highlands is evident in contemporary literature, with the historian Alexander Cunningham, writing between 1714 and 1737 describing the Highlanders as a clannish race, addicted to arms. Others saw Highlanders as barbarians, analogous to Gibbon's Huns, with two significant effects on the related image. Firstly it promoted an exaggerated militaristic view of the Highlander and secondly suggested that he was a

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<sup>91</sup> For the mutiny of the Black Watch see John Prebble, *Mutiny*, Middlesex 1975.

<sup>92</sup> Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788*, East Lothian, 1996, p.169.

<sup>93</sup> Macinnes, p.170. For a discussion of this view see John Stuart Shaw, *The Political History of Eighteenth-Century Scotland*, Hampshire, 1999, p.87. Shaw regards Macinnes's argument as largely persuasive. Macinnes's account is one the few to consider the changes within Highland society rather than their changing perception, see also Dodgshon and Charles W. J. Withers, *The Transformation of a Cultural Region*, London & New York, 1988.

<sup>94</sup> Dodgshon, p.89.

<sup>95</sup> Illustrated in and discussed by Holloway (1989), pp.69-72.

barbarian whose 'accoutrements, methods and motivational all emerged spontaneously from his way of life'; a kind of 'natural' soldier. These constructions matched the concerns of the British state at the time of the 'Forty-Five, but also provided a positive model that was exploited in the use of Highland regiments in the Seven Years War.<sup>96</sup>

The recruitment of Highlanders into the regular British army had begun before the 'Forty-Five. Six independent companies, whose dress was indistinguishable from other Highlanders, were raised by General Wade in 1725. In 1743 these companies formed the first Highland regiment of the British army, the 43<sup>rd</sup> Royal Highland or Black Watch. The next important development in the habilitation of the British Highland soldier came during the Seven Years War when Highland regiments were used extensively in the battles against the French in Canada, with the 78<sup>th</sup> Regiment playing a crucial role in a number of British victories.<sup>97</sup>

Consequently, the view of the Highlander as militaristic, initially threatening, became positive and symbolic of British patriotism. The Highland regiments, as Pitt acclaimed proudly in his speech of 1766, served the British government well. Pitt confirmed the extent to which the Highland regiments had become an essential and recognized part of the British army.

I sought for merit wherever it was to be found. It is my boast that I was the first minister who looked for it; and I found it in the mountains of the north. I called it forth and drew it into your service, a hardy and intrepid race of men; men who, when left by your jealousy, became a prey to the artifices of your enemies, and had gone nigh to have overturned the State in the war before the last. These men, in the last war, were brought to combat on your side: they served with fidelity as they fought

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<sup>96</sup> Quotation and information on the literary formation of the Highlands as militaristic are taken from Womack, pp.27-28.

<sup>97</sup> In Canada the 78<sup>th</sup> regiment were involved in crucial British victories at Louisbourg, Nova Scotia and the Heights of Abraham in Quebec in 1759. For the military rehabilitation of the Highlander see Clyde pp.150-180.

with valour, and conquered for you in every part of the world: detested be the national reflections against them!<sup>98</sup>

The virtues of the Highland soldier as a fighting force were carried through in descriptions of the peculiarity of their dress. The anonymous author of the 1743 *A Short History of the Highland Regiment* stated that the independent companies of soldiers based in the Highlands continued to wear 'their ancient habit that they might pursue any of these offenders [Jacobites] into their fastnesses, which was a scheme well enough contrived, Since the Highlanders, whenever they were in arms, by their agility and perfect knowledge of the country, had always been too many for the regular troops.'<sup>99</sup> Their dress facilitated movement; it was said to help develop the sinuous quality of leg that was a boon to hardiness.

Against a background of diminishing militarism in the Highlands, and increasing public recognition of this, how should we interpret Highland portraits? For some the issue is straightforward. Ramsay's *John Campbell, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Loudon* of c1747 (Fig. 23) is one of the earliest examples of a portrait of a member of the British military in Highland dress. Clad in the uniform of the 54<sup>th</sup> Highlanders, the great military commander is painted in full length, in a vast Highland landscape. A scarlet military jacket is the most significant and distinctively military aspect of the sitter's dress, and he wears ~~the government~~ <sup>red</sup> tartan of ~~green, blue~~ and black.<sup>100</sup> Most importantly his black cockade, denoting Hanoverian loyalty, is clearly shown on the bonnet he carries.

<sup>98</sup> Quoted in Womack, p.31.

<sup>99</sup> *A Short History of the Highland Regiment*, London, 1743, p.18.

<sup>100</sup> Dunbar, pp.176-8, identifies the tartan as that of the regiment. However, it also accords with the governmental tartan described by Cheape, p.38. who also notes, p.44, that the Cameron Highlanders were the first regiment to break with the convention of government tartan in 1793 when they invented a tartan of their own. Government tartan is that which is today associated with the Black Watch regiment.

Loudon was a loyal Hanoverian, governor of Stirling castle in 1741, and *Aide de Camp* to the King in 1743. Colonel of the 54<sup>th</sup> Highlanders, which he raised on behalf of the government, he was additionally Captain General of His Majesty's forces in North America.<sup>101</sup> During the 'Forty-Five Loudon commanded not only his own troops, but those of many others loyal to the Hanoverian crown, and played a key role in the war in the Highlands, making the initial capture of Lord Lovat and planning that of Prince Charles.<sup>102</sup> This portrait was probably painted after his regiment's return to Scotland from Flanders in 1747, and before it was disbanded in 1748. Following Loudon's role as General of His Majesty's forces in North America, an engraving of this portrait was produced in 1755.<sup>103</sup> As a military commander, Loudon was exempt from the ban on Highland dress in Scotland and therefore this portrait does not present any problems in this respect. Worn by such an individual, Highland dress was detached from its antagonistic otherness, and, in addition, Loudon was able to usurp, through association, some of its militaristic qualities.

Similarly unambiguous portraits of members of the British military include *William, 18<sup>th</sup> Earl of Sutherland*, by Ramsay (Fig. 6), *Thomas Stuart of Dalguise* painted by David Martin, c1775, J. S. Copley's 1784 portrait of *Hugh Montgomery, 12<sup>th</sup> Earl of Eglinton* (Fig. 7) and Angelica Kauffman's portrait of his son *Archibald, Lord Montgomery* of c1800.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>101</sup> DNB.

<sup>102</sup> SRO GD1/53/79 Memoir from the North, 26 December 1745. This document describes the troop movements of rebels and those loyal to the government under the command of Lord Loudon. Macleods, Grants, Sutherlands, McKies, Munros, Burghers and Seaforth men were already under his command and more were expected.

<sup>103</sup> Dunbar, pp.176-8.

<sup>104</sup> *Archibald, Lord Montgomery* (c1800, oil on canvas, approx. 44 x 30in, private collection). Reynolds began a portrait of 11<sup>th</sup> Earl of Eglinton in 1784, from the style of the military bonnet it is likely that this was intended to be a full-length portrait in Highland dress. In 1780 John Singleton Copley sent only one portrait to the Royal Academy exhibition at Somerset House, that of Major Hugh Montgomerie painted in the uniform of his Highland regiment, with the destruction of the camps of the defeated native American's painted burning in the background, and soldiers of the regiment's winning victory over the enemy in the near and mid foreground, Charles R. Leslie *Life of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, London, 1865, p.293. It is therefore clear that Reynolds would have seen this portrait, and it would no doubt have been familiar to the 11<sup>th</sup> Earl Montgomerie.



All of these sitters are dressed in full military uniform, the bonnet and military jacket distinguishing their dress as such. While the jacket, braid and other trimmings are specific to these sitters' respective regiments, their tartan kilt is of the government pattern of broad green and blue bands.<sup>105</sup> The iconography of the portraits also places them within the genre of military, heroic portraiture.

In Ramsay's portrait of *William, Earl of Sutherland* (1735-66) (Fig. 6) of 1763 the sitter is dressed in the uniform of the colonel of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sutherland Fencibles, scarlet military coat, kilt or belted plaid, bonnet, broad sword and black cockade.<sup>106</sup> These, importantly, denote both the soldier's membership of a Highland regiment and his loyalty to Britain and the House of Hannover. Set in a sublime Highland landscape, high and craggy mountains rising up in the distance, and tall trees framing the sitter to his left, Sutherland shares Loudon's pose. Against this specific setting is painted a conventional military portrait. Again this portrait appropriates Highland virtues to Hanoverian ends, although not all portraits in Highland dress are of sitters so unambiguous in their Hanoverian loyalty, as will be discussed later.

As clear expressions of membership of Britain's forces, these portraits are undoubtedly patriotic and reveal the sitters' loyalty to, and association with, a British

<sup>105</sup> For details of their uniforms see Dunbar, pp.181 & 185.

<sup>106</sup> This portrait was erroneously given by Alastair Smart, *Allan Ramsay: painter, Essayist and Man of the Enlightenment*, New Haven & London, 1992, as painted in 1753. However, Alastair Smart (John Ingamells, ed.) *Allan Ramsay a Complete Catalogue of his Paintings*, New Haven & London, 1999, gives a date of 1763. The government tartan and uniform are identified by Dunbar, p.182. According to William Spencer, *Records of the Militia and Volunteer Forces 1757-1945*, London, revised and updated 1997, p.28, fencible corps provided the government with a means other than a Militia of raising a military force in times of extreme danger. Fencible regiments were, unlike the Militia, not subject to continuous service liability, and were raised only during periods when the regular army was serving overseas. The Government's refusal to grant a militia in Scotland caused a great deal of agitation, and the desire to agitate for one was the *raison d'être* of the Poker Club founded by Adam Ferguson. See John Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue*, Edinburgh, 1985.

national identity.<sup>107</sup> Other portraits are less straightforward - Pompeo Batoni's *Colonel William Gordon of Fyvie* (Fig. 24), in which the Highland uniform has been historicised as a Roman toga, nonetheless remains expressive of Gordon's military achievements. The reference to a Roman toga reinforces his position through the appropriation of a classical military iconography, appropriate to his visit to Rome. Artistic liberty has been taken in the depiction of Gordon's uniform, but it is clearly identifiable as such, an important point during the period of proscription.

There is therefore a body of male Highland portraits in which the sitter is dressed in military uniform, which fits within an evolving military and heroic style of British portraiture. However, changes in Highland society and its perception blurred the edges of Highland imagery, especially at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. The interpretation of portraits of this date, even those which might appear to signal a military identity, is thus increasingly complex.

Therefore, to understand *Alastair Macdonell of Glengarry* (Fig. 2) and *MacNab* (Fig. 3) simply as military, and thus expressions of British national identity, is problematic.<sup>108</sup> Although MacNab did have military connections, as a major in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion (Bredalbane Highlanders) 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Perthshire Brigade, and while his dress has military associations, it is not a military uniform. Indeed, only the feathered bonnet can unambiguously be classified as such.<sup>109</sup> And while Macdonell also had military connections, raising a company for the Glengarry, or British Highland Fencible Infantry, and becoming Colonel of the Glengarry, Morar, and Letterfindlay Volunteers in 1803, he was mainly anxious to re-establish the

<sup>107</sup> This argument supports the view held by Fintan Cullen (1993).

<sup>108</sup> Cullen (1993), *passim*.

<sup>109</sup> Dunbar, p.185.

'traditional' life of a Highland chief.<sup>110</sup> It is in both of these capacities that we should consider the identity expressed in his portrait.

During the period of proscription, 1746 - 1782, images of Highlanders in their military Highland dress proliferated. Such military portraits offered Highlanders an opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty to the Hanoverian government, their military prowess through the leadership of a people popularly conceived as 'natural' warriors, and their positions as heroes of British expansion overseas. The repeal of the Disarming Act was accompanied not only by a new fashion for Highland dress, but also coincided with a desire to reclaim, or reinvent, the Gaelic culture that was lost during this period, and which encompassed much more than simply dress. It is in the light of this development that we shall now consider the portraits of Glengarry and MacNab.

The Disarming Act, which proscribed the wearing of Highland dress in Scotland, was repealed largely through the offices of the Highland Society of London founded in 1778.<sup>111</sup> In many respects this society was established for reasons similar to the earlier London-Welsh Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion.<sup>112</sup> The Highland Society of London encouraged Highland virtues and sought to preserve its traditions; its initial condition for membership, fluency in Gaelic, was quickly broadened to Highland descent. However, by 1813 one of its leading members, Sir John Sinclair, believed that the 'true qualification is not so much the distinction of "Highland Birth"... but the possession of a "Highland Spirit".<sup>113</sup> Highland identity had therefore moved from one based upon cultural possession

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<sup>110</sup> For his military associations see the *DNB*.

<sup>111</sup> The society was initially known as the Gaelic Society of London. See Withers (1992), pp.150-151.

<sup>112</sup> The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, was founded in 1751 for the study and promulgation of ancient British language, customs and society. See Smiles, pp.16, 40-41, 55 and 228, in particular p.16 for this point.

<sup>113</sup> Quoted in Withers (1992), p.151.

to one of cultural association, which is highly significant considering the near contemporaneity of these portraits and Sinclair's comment.

The portraits of Glengarry and MacNab are undoubtedly supposed to instill within the viewer an idea of military prowess. Firstly, as we have seen, MacNab's feathered bonnet is military and his jacket makes military references with its braids and epaulettes. Secondly, by the 1790s Highland dress had become indisputably associated with the military, being interpreted as a fashion for things military, rather than Highland. MacNab holds a gun in his left hand which is placed close to a sword. His expression is grim and determined, while behind him dark clouds swirl menacingly. This iconography also contributes to the impression of this portrait as an image of the sitter as a military commander.<sup>114</sup>

However, it is an image that has more to do with the association created in the popular imagination of the Highlander as naturally inclined to such an occupation than with actuality. The lack of proper military uniform points to this discrepancy. MacNab wants to be regarded as military, but is not absolutely associated with a specific regiment. His placement within a Highland landscape, and the details that are known of his life and personality, point to an interpretation of this portrait as an expression of the taking on, by Highland chiefs and landlords of the image of the Highlander and his way of life as constructed by others.

MacNab, 16<sup>th</sup> chief of the clan of that name, sought to reconstruct the Highland culture that was largely lost after the 'Forty-Five (and which is to be discussed in more detail below). As has been commonly quoted in reference to this man, he 'behaved in the

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<sup>114</sup> Shawe-Taylor, p.58 describes the powerful appearance of this portrait.

Age of Reason like an unruly feudal lord'<sup>115</sup> His interpretation of Highland culture as ostensibly militaristic would seem to be premised upon the stereotypes of this culture that were created from outside it, and which had by the beginning of the nineteenth century become almost the only interpretation of this culture available, the culture it sought to represent as other, having largely disappeared.

A similar interpretation can be formed of Raeburn's portrait of Glengarry, who had also been painted at a younger age, in similar Highland garb, by Angelica Kauffman when in Rome, thus testifying to a consistent sense of self-identity. Raeburn's portrait of Glengarry contains prominent and multifarious arms, in which the sitter stands in what might be interpreted as the great hall of the clan seat. The sitter's stance has been described as posturing.<sup>116</sup> Behind him hangs the armoury of the Highlands, a studded targe, crossed swords with basket hilts, powder horn and gun. He holds a long gun at arm's length, a row of three daggers lines the right side of his body, and a sword can also be detected worn in the shadows of his left side. A further dagger is tucked into his short hose and a small pistol into his waist band. These, despite the contemporary military bonnet, are not current but archaic, outmoded weapons of war. This desire to refer to the past, while asserting his position within the British establishment, is also expressed in Glengarry's dress and life.

Glengarry's anxiety to style himself as a Highland chieftain is well known. His wish to return to a life that had disappeared was recognized by his contemporary Walter Scott, and in this Glengarry and MacNab share a common romanticism of the past. Glengarry was said always to wear Highland dress and was followed by a retinue, that

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<sup>115</sup> Quoted in Thomson, p.151.

<sup>116</sup> Thomson, p.152.

included a bard, known as Glengarry's Tail.<sup>117</sup> However, this Highland identity, which he so forcefully expressed, was not inconsistent with the British identity to which he was equally determined to give expression. He corresponded with Henry Dundas (solicitor-general of Scotland) in 1795 about a plan to form not only a group of Fencibles, but also a Battalion of the lines.<sup>118</sup> This correspondence makes it clear that the providing of Highland soldiers was an expression of his British patriotism, and national identity. In April 1795 Glengarry wrote 'I conceived it to be the proper way of testifying my Zeal for the present Government...that I should flow forth the spirite of my Instructions and produce a good Corps of real Highlanders.' He continued 'I have neither English nor Irishmen among them, so that they may be called real a Scotch Regiment.'<sup>119</sup> In a letter to Dundas later that same year he spoke of 'the pride of every true Briton, having done his duty to King and country.'<sup>120</sup> It is therefore apparent that Glengarry's Highland identity was also, in its militaristic manifestation, an expression of British identity.

This connection may also be found in the Highland dress worn in Raeburn's portrait, which is not simply the kilt and jacket that were fashionably derived from military clothing. What appears to be a kilt is actually a belted plaid, as a frill of tartan hanging over the belt can clearly be seen. In addition the plaid, although largely unseen, appears to sweep up the back and over the left shoulder, in the manner of the Highland dress that preceded the plaid's separation into kilt and upper garment. This concern with authenticity of costume was promoted by the Highland Society of London and in particular Sir John Sinclair,

<sup>117</sup> There are a number accounts of Glengarry's life style. The most informative is Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Macdonalds and the Lords of the Isles*, Inverness, 1881, pp.356-359.

<sup>118</sup> SRO GD51/6/189/1 Letter of 4 April 1795, Glengarry to Henry Dundas.

<sup>119</sup> SRO GD51/6/189/1.

<sup>120</sup> SRO GD51/6/189/5.

although the society may have been insufficiently 'authentic' for Glengarry as he founded the Society of True Highlanders a few years after this picture was painted.<sup>121</sup>

Duncan Thomson has argued that this portrait is concerned with 'artifice and a romantic longing for a nebulous past.' However, although this portrait may refer to the desire of the sitter to reconstruct publicly a lifestyle that was, as Walter Scott said, a hundred years out of date, it is also part of that public statement, and construction.<sup>122</sup> In its details of arms, and concern with the authenticity of the dress, the past is defined in the present, and as militaristic. Glengarry's re-construction of Highland life was for him unproblematic. It was represented through his retinue of guards and bard and the foundation of the Society of True Highlanders. This, and the portrait of the MacNab, construct the Highlander as British hero.

This point has also been made by Cullen, but his argument is based upon the belief that Raeburn's portraits show members of a displaced elite, and 'suggest an uncertain identity, emotionally weak in its nostalgia for a lost world of clan life and traditional dress, and yet defiant in its new-found role of purveyor of imperial heroes. Dressed for war, the three chieftains offer a military aspect that is a vital part of their public personae.'<sup>123</sup> The idea that these portraits are based upon weak nostalgia needs to be challenged. Not only are these portraits based upon the reconstruction of the Highlander as a British military hero, but they are the deliberate presentation of the present, as expressing the full assimilation of the constructed, into the actual, past.

While the militaristic Highlander also signified Britishness, these portraits remain at the same time, as contemporary accounts recognized, representations of Highland chiefs. A

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<sup>121</sup> Rev. A. Macdonald and Rev A. MacDonald, *The Clan Donald*, Vol.III, Inverness, 1904, p.486. The society was founded in 1816.

review of the portrait of Glengarry in the *Morning Post* described the painting, 'A fine whole length of a Highland chieftain in his tartan dress is full of character and of considerable novelty.'<sup>124</sup> However, this adds to their nostalgia and illusion, as the chiefly values and way of life they represented had passed. The relationship between chief and clan was now that of landlord and tenant. The implications of this process of economic and cultural change are important not only for Raeburn's Highland chiefs, but also for portraits painted in the second half of the eighteenth century, as it was a process that while originating before the 'Forty-Five, was most fully realized after the rebellion. However, before coming to this important point, consideration will be given to the more general question of portraits painted during the period of prohibition.

Despite the legality of the many portraits painted during the period 1747-1782, the very act of commissioning such a portrait, under prohibition, was a most emphatic statement. It is therefore important to consider who the sitters were, how they are represented and who the paintings were to address. One of the earliest Highland portraits painted following prohibition in Scotland, was Ramsay's portrait of *Norman, 22<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Macleod* (Fig. 5), a full-length in Ramsay's grand manner, painted in London between 1747 and 1748; and a painting we shall return to later in this discussion.<sup>125</sup> The Disarming Act that laid out the proscription was published in 1746, and in this year Macleod, resident in London, sent for his tartan plaid. As Alastair Smart notes, Macleod, MP for Inverness-shire, voted against the bill, and although Highland dress was not banned in London, this portrait may be seen in some senses as a protest at this legislation, and at least as a response

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<sup>122</sup> Thomson, p.152.

<sup>123</sup> Cullen (1993), p.607.

<sup>124</sup> Thomson, p.152.



to it.<sup>126</sup> However, the response was one given not only to London but to Macleod's tacksmen, clan and tenants, as it was sent to Macleod's home of Dunvegan Castle on Skye by at least 1753.<sup>127</sup>

This bold and deliberate pictorial articulation of Macleod's political beliefs is the least ambiguous in the portraits painted at this time. The motivations and assertions of identity that lie behind others are less straightforward. In 1749 William Mosman painted, in Scotland, a portrait of *John Campbell of the Bank* (Fig. 9), Cashier of the Royal Bank of Scotland. As Holloway points out, Campbell was related to the house of Argyll and his loyalty to the Hanoverians had been more than proved during the 'Forty-Five. This portrait has little to do with the sitter as a Scot, and is concerned rather with his personal and familial position and rank. The wealth and position he attained is attested by the elaborate marble table on which he rests his left hand, while his right hand tucked inside his jacket and the forward position of his left leg refer to his status as a gentleman. A bag of coins on the table and a bank note, signed by himself, attest to his position within the bank and his personal achievements.

A bonnet and pistols also on the table may allude to Campbell's ability to offer security to the bank, as he had moved the bank's assets to the safety of the castle during the 'Forty-Five. The specific Highland references of a targe hung on the wall, velvet trimmed tartan jacket and kilt, and accompanying arms of sword and dagger, should not be seen in isolation, but in conjunction with the view through the window of Ardmaddy Bay.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>125</sup> The details of the commissioning of this portrait, and Macleod's opposition to the law which proscribed Highland dress, are given in Alastair Smart, *Allan Ramsay 1713-1784*, EC, SNPG, Edinburgh, 1992, pp.111-112.

<sup>126</sup> Smart (Edinburgh, 1992), pp.111-112.

<sup>127</sup> Smart (Edinburgh, 1992), p.112, and Smart (London, 1992), p82.

<sup>128</sup> My reading of this picture owes much to Holloway, in particular his information on the bay, and Campbell's family and actions during the 'Forty-Five. Holloway (1989), pp.109-112.

Campbell's father was Colin Campbell of Armaddy Bay and this landscape and his dress represents another aspect of Campbell's personal identity, his family and their position within Gaelic society. Holloway suggests that Campbell's confidence in wearing tartan in this portrait is an indication of his trusted position as an Hanoverian.<sup>129</sup> However, it would be a strange way of expressing one's loyalty to a regime to have one's portrait painted in the dress that had been proscribed only a few years before, and for the wearing of which there were severe penalties.

Perhaps his unquestioned loyalty made this portrait unproblematic, but its expression of a Highland identity is explicit. An interpretation of the picture may be more successfully realized by considering a further point made by Holloway, that Campbell was able to straddle the potentially conflicting identities associated with Highland and lowland culture, as may be evidenced by his celebration in a poem by the Gael, Duncan Ban Macintyre, and his trusted position at the bank.<sup>130</sup>

Although the majority of Highland portraits were painted by London-based or Continental artists, it seems that, in the cases for which we have evidence, as detailed above, the portraits were intended to be hung in the Highland homes of the sitter. That is, they were intended for Highland rather than lowland spectators. While the significance of the combination of prestigious artists and grand manner will be discussed below, the conflation of lowland and Highland cultural references is central. In order to understand these paintings more fully it is necessary to understand Highland culture, rather than simply the many external visions of that culture that are normally invoked.

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<sup>129</sup> Holloway (1989), p.111.

<sup>130</sup> Holloway (1989), pp.109-112.

The important cultural changes that followed the 'Forty-Five are often regarded as marking the death of the old Highlands.<sup>131</sup> However, important changes in the social and, particularly, economic circumstances of the Highlands were evident from the end of the seventeenth century, and accelerated after Culloden.<sup>132</sup> Often described through the eighteenth-century term Improvement, the changes in the social structure of the Highlands has been summarized by the phrase 'From Chiefs to Landlords.'<sup>133</sup> Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries the Highlands' economy and social structure changed, from one concerned with the provision and support of as large a following of clan and dependents on the chief's land as possible, to one concerned with maximizing the revenue of that land.<sup>134</sup> This came about for a number of reasons, firstly, although not necessarily primarily, through the encouragement of government. The Statutes of Iona (1609) encouraged chiefs to attend lowland markets, inducing trade and new values in the Highlands, and in the eighteenth century change was promoted through agricultural improving societies, initiated as a means of managing the forfeited estates.<sup>135</sup> Secondly, as chiefs and landlords became involved in lowland society, visits to the south and the Continent gave them an appetite for fine clothes and furnishings that intensified the need for cash. This exposure also led them to encounter new tastes and exposed them to new modes

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<sup>131</sup> This point is made by Eric Cregeen, 'The Changing Role of the House of Argyll in the Scottish Highlands' in Phillipson and Mitchison, pp.5-23, p.8.

<sup>132</sup> The most detailed study of these changes can be found in Dodgshon. See also Malcolm Gray, *The Highland Economy, 1750-1850*, London, 1957, Cregeen, and Youngson (1973).

<sup>133</sup> Dodgshon uses this as the title to his book, however, it is a sentiment found commonly in the literature, for example Cregeen, p.9.

<sup>134</sup> This summary is based upon the work of Dodgshon and Cregeen.

<sup>135</sup> For the Statutes of Iona see Dodgshon, p.102.

of behaviour.<sup>136</sup> This new taste for luxury goods, purchasable only through cash led to mounting debts, and the consequent need to increase the revenue obtained from the land.<sup>137</sup>

The acquisition of new and luxurious tastes, together with increased contact with the manners of the south and the Continent, are important factors in our understanding of why Highland portraits should proliferate during the eighteenth century, and why Highland chiefs should choose to look to the south and the Continent for artists to paint them, not least because it may be seen within the important Highland context of chiefly display. Chiefly display, bound up in the clan and its chief's distinct ideology and behaviour, centred around feasting and feuding. Feasting demonstrated the chief's ability more than to sustain a large following, whilst feuding acquired the land and livestock that helped ensure this provision.<sup>138</sup> Pipers, harpists, story tellers, and clan historians provided entertainment at feasts, but they were also symbols of high status who propagated the traditions of the clan, essential to its identity.<sup>139</sup> Portraits of chiefs and landlords may be regarded as another form of display, one that was introduced as a result of the acquisition of the tastes and manners of the south, and which therefore helped ground old traditions within modern ideas of civility.

Highland chiefs are usually painted full-length, and by the most prominent painters of the day, and although luxury goods, in relative terms the expense of a portrait, even by artists as prominent as Batoni or Ramsay, was not large in comparison to other aristocratic expenditure.<sup>140</sup> Even so, the choice of artist and format mark these portraits as indicators of

<sup>136</sup> Dodgshon, p.115 and Cregeen pp.8-9.

<sup>137</sup> Dodgshon states that by the 1730s many large estates, for example Campbell of Glenorchy, Macleod of Dunvegan, Macdonald, Seaforth and Clanranald, were suffering severe financial problems.

<sup>138</sup> Dodgshon, p.8.

<sup>139</sup> Dodgshon, p.89 and Cregeen, p.7.

<sup>140</sup> This point is demonstrated by Pointon (1993), pp.50-51, who argues that although for some families portraits were often an item of necessary expenditure, for others they were not regarded as objects of high aesthetic or monetary value. In the 1760s Batoni received £25 for a full-length while Gainsborough charged 60 guineas and Allan Ramsay £84, all artists whose work appealed to members of the Highland aristocracy. However, these prices are not expensive in relative terms, as Pointon states 'A portrait of Lord Boringdon's

wealth and status in the culture of Europe and the south. They can therefore be regarded as modern status symbols, acquired though the process of increased contact with lowland culture. Ramsay's portrait of *Norman, 22<sup>nd</sup> chief of Macleod* (Fig. 5) is an apposite illustration, painted by one of the most distinguished portrait painters of the day whilst Macleod was attending parliament in London. However, Macleod was suffering financial embarrassment, his demand for higher rents from his estates dating from the time of his becoming a member of Parliament in 1741.<sup>141</sup> Clearly this portrait is part of the change in tastes and lifestyle that Macleod enjoyed in London, and a potent symbol of his belonging to fashionable London-based culture.

Portraits could combine new and traditional systems for the display of status, as is exemplified by the full-length portraits of members of the Grant's retainers (Figs. 18, 19 & 20). Tartan is significant in the portrait of Macleod, but more importantly, is the form in which it is worn. Only men of gentlemanly or aristocratic status wore trews. Another portrait by Ramsay, *Hon. Francis Charteris and his Wife Lady Katherine Gordon* (Fig. 25), William Aikman's portrait of *John, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Bute* as a young man and the double portrait of *Sir James and Sir Alexander Macdonald* as children (Fig. 17) testify to the importance of this dress as a symbol of rank prior to, or just at the time of, proscription. It was also a point that Sir John Sinclair of Ulster, who had researched Highland dress, was keen to make in portraits of him by Benjamin West and Henry Raeburn (Fig. 1).<sup>142</sup>

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wife could be purchased in the 1770s from the top London portrait painter [Reynolds] for roughly what John Parker [of Saltram] spent on his coat and little more than four times what he spent on meat for two weeks of dinners.'

<sup>141</sup> Cregeen, p.10, discusses both Macleod's situation and the financial problems of Highland chiefs in general.

<sup>142</sup> *John, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Bute* (c1730-40, oil on canvas, 94 x 57in (238.8 x 144.8cm), private collection), Benjamin West, *Sir John Sinclair of Ulster* (1798, oil on canvas, 96 x 69½in (244 x 176.5cm), Wick Town Hall, Caithness).

Discussing military portraits it was noted that large numbers of weapons were displayed; but other non-military portraits, which do not promote a military identity, also contain substantial pieces of weaponry, probably to connote prestige and display, for chiefs consolidated their status through the control of prestige goods, including weapons.<sup>143</sup> The Disarming Acts of 1716, 1725 and 1746 would have undoubtedly added to both the value of armoury in the Highlands and the prestige in its display.<sup>144</sup> Their prominent position within Highland portraiture must undoubtedly be related to their importance in chiefly display.

Some of the most important elements of chiefly display are integrated into the landscape backgrounds of many of these portraits. Land was vital to chiefs and landlords, as it supported first the clan and then, through the economic changes outlined above, the landlord.<sup>145</sup> However, land was of symbolic as well as economic and social value. Fundamentally, a clan cannot be conceived in purely social terms, 'their bonds of kinship were only sustained as meaningful when and where members of a clan had possession of land, either as owners or tenants.'<sup>146</sup> Further, land gave the clan its position and identity through it and its resources, it was a means of strategic control including the ability to play a political role.<sup>147</sup> Land embodied status, and a chief could enhance his status and that of the clan by the physical (and social) extension of land.<sup>148</sup> Even though the motivations behind landholdings changed, and the structure and use of the land altered to raise more and more

<sup>143</sup> For chiefly display see Dodgshon, pp.90-92.

<sup>144</sup> For the Disarming acts see Clyde, pp.8-9.

<sup>145</sup> Land was of course also central to the English aristocracy, the law of primogeniture sought to ensure that land was not divided into smaller and smaller parcels, thus maintaining power through landownership. Landed estates were thus central to a family's prestige and standing within an hierarchically organized society. However, there remain distinct differences between the status of land for the English aristocracy and Highland chiefs, although this changed of course as the Highland chief's position altered from that of chief to that of landlord.

<sup>146</sup> Dodgshon, p.8.

<sup>147</sup> Dodgshon, p.8. The landholdings of the house of Argyll were the source of its political power, as discussed by Cregeen, *passim*.

<sup>148</sup> Dodgshon, p.34.

revenue, its necessity and status did not diminish. While the social structure of the Highlands altered, and the patterns of landholdings continued to change, the import of land remained.

The landscape settings of these portraits are therefore of great significance in representing the lands and hence status of the sitter. Examples include portraits such as John Michael Wright's early rendering of *Lord Mungo Murray* in which a mountainous landscape is peopled by what can be assumed to be one of Murray's clan or tenants, or later Ramsay's portrait of *Hon. Francis Charteris and his Wife Lady Katherine Gordon* (Fig. 25).<sup>149</sup> Few portraits in Highland dress have interior settings, and often in these we find a view of a landscape through a window. William Mosman's portrait of *John Campbell of the Bank* (Fig. 9) uses this device, the interior and exterior perhaps representing the two worlds he inhabited. In this portrait the careful delineation of actual place, the ancestral home of the sitter, was demonstrated to be of importance to the portrait, and it is this aspect of Highland portraits that will now be addressed.

Mosman's posthumous portrait of *Sir Robert Dalrymple of Castleton* (Fig. 8) is a portrait of elegance and refinement in tartan, his carefully posed figure standing in front of a classical column, one hand indicating a map laid on an ornate marble table.<sup>150</sup> A window reveals a landscape in which the buildings, water and bands of trees are carefully delineated, and although they do not make reference to any particular area of Dalrymple's estate, the

<sup>149</sup> *Lord Mungo Murray* (c1680-84, oil on canvas, 88 ½ x 60¾in, (224.8 x 154.3cm), SNPG).

<sup>150</sup> This portrait was made by Mosman in 1744, a copy after a portrait by Aikman. However, only the face was copied as a letter to Sir Heugh Dalrymple at North Berwick House reveals - 'the picture is Intirely original Except the Face.' I am grateful to James Holloway for drawing my attention to this portrait and for providing me with a copy of the letter.

conventions of portraiture imply that this land is his.<sup>151</sup> A direct reference to Dalrymple's estates is made through the State map on the table, on which his hand points to the area of his North Berwick estates.<sup>152</sup> Smart has identified the background of Ramsay's portrait of *Norman, 22<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Macleod* (Fig. 5), as the Isle of Skye and the sitter's ancestral home of Dunvegan Castle.<sup>153</sup> However, the significance of the landscape goes beyond the simple identification of sitter with place, for the landscape depicted also possesses significance for the chiefly display of the Macleods. The flat topped mountain that is seen to the left of Dunvegan Castle was known as Macleod's Table. It was a symbol of the chief's hospitality, a central part of his status and its display.<sup>154</sup>

An even more potent example of significant landscape can be found in the portrait of *Sir Alexander Macdonald of Sleat, 9<sup>th</sup> Bart and 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Macdonald* (1745-95) (Fig. 10).<sup>155</sup> Painted c1772-c1795, this is an imposing full-length portrait in which the sitter wears a tartan kilt, jacket and waistcoat. His hand is tucked in his waistcoat, which, together with his stance, promotes him as a gentleman. The viewer looks upwards while Macdonald looks to the side and distance, pre-occupied. A sword is tucked under his left arm and in his right he holds a feathered bonnet. Surveying his land he is confident of the protection he can offer his clan and tenants.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>151</sup> This is implied by the association to be made in the viewer's mind between the land marked on the estate map on the table to which Dalrymple points, and the landscape viewed through in the background of the portrait.

<sup>152</sup> I am grateful to Sir Hew Hamilton-Dalrymple, Bt. for identifying the estate, which includes the Bass Rock, Tantallon Castle and the village of Castleton. The family have previously sought to identify the landscape in the portrait, but as they have been unable to do so have concluded that it is purely imaginary.

<sup>153</sup> Smart (London, 1992), p.81.

<sup>154</sup> Dunvegan's Table is described in Dodgshon, p.84.

<sup>155</sup> The artist has not yet been identified. With regard to date, the landscape has been identified as being copied from an engraving published in Thomas Pennant's *Tour in Scotland* of 1772, and must therefore be after this, see National Galleries of Scotland, *Gallery News*, June/July 1988. Macdonald inherited from his elder brother the title of 9<sup>th</sup> Baronet of Sleat in 1766, and in 1776 was created Baron of Slate and 1st Lord Macdonald.

<sup>156</sup> Although Macdonald was an ensign in the Coldstream Guards from 1758-60, and in 1777 raised a regiment known as the 76<sup>th</sup> or Macdonald Highlanders, there is little to suggest that this portrait has any military



This conventional portrait of a gentleman in a landscape is particularized by the wearing of Highland dress, and by the landscape in which it is set. The castle in the background has been identified as Duntulm Castle on Skye, not the sitter's home but a residence the family had abandoned in 1715 for Armadale in the south of the island. This landscape, taken from an engraving contained in Pennant's *Tour in Scotland* of 1772, locates the place where Macdonald stands as *Cnoc an Eireachd*, or The Hill of Assembly.<sup>157</sup> It was at such places that the clan chiefs administered their legal powers to punish thieves and murderers caught red handed, and, exceptionally, the right to try civil and criminal cases.<sup>158</sup> However, the right of heritable jurisdiction had been abolished by Parliament in 1747, many years before this portrait was painted. Both the landscape and Highland dress in the painting would therefore appear to assert the rights and traditions banned or abolished by parliament of Macdonald as a Highland chief.

Anti-British sentiment was not automatically implicit in this kind of iconography, for reasons that are both particular to this portrait and of more general relevance for understanding Highland portraits, including Raeburn's *Macdonell of Glengarry* (Fig. 2).<sup>159</sup> The identity that these sitters presented through their portraits, and which was directed at those who would have seen these portraits in the Highlands, was an attempt to recover the ideology and status of the Highland chief at a time when these were being eroded, not simply by government legislation but more significantly by the chiefs themselves.

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connections. Macdonald was offered the position of Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment, but declined the rank, recommending Major John Macdonald of Glengarry in his place. See Mackenzie, p.245.

<sup>157</sup> I am grateful to James Holloway for drawing my attention to the significance of the landscape in this painting and for providing me with this information.

<sup>158</sup> Macinnes, p.5.

<sup>159</sup> Given the date and content of this portrait it may be an expression of anti-British sentiment, however, it is a point that given the available evidence is impossible to substantiate. Such a reading would not preclude the one argued here below.

Despite Macdonald's visual assertion of both the rights and responsibilities of a Highland chief, the reality was very different. He, and his relation Macdonell of Glengarry, retained external signs of the chief, in the form of retainers, while acting as commercial landlords. It was an image that both were keen to project and to protect. In effect they participated in the creation of the Highland myth through the retention and expression of symbols, hiding behind them the actuality of change. Macdonald's reputation has largely been formed by Boswell and Johnson's visit to Armadale, in Boswell's *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson*, first published in 1785. Boswell's account of a visit to Macdonald was such that he was forced to withdraw twenty- six lines and change many others for the second edition. Boswell's enforced changes were illustrated in a contemporary print *Revising for the Second Edition* (Fig. 21).<sup>160</sup> Boswell's assertion in the first edition that 'Instead of finding the head of the Macdonalds surrounded with his clan, and a festive entertainment, we had small company, and cannot boast of our cheer' was replaced in the second with a description of Armadale and the surrounding landscape.<sup>161</sup> Boswell and Johnson were evidently disappointed to find the way of life that they had expected was no longer, and Boswell reports that Johnson was directly critical of Macdonald's failure to adhere to his idea of a Highland chief. But their pointed criticism of the lack of entertainment and victuals indicates that the idea of feasting was central to this expectation, and their observations of change are extremely pertinent, and not simply a mythical and romantic version of Highland traditions.<sup>162</sup>

<sup>160</sup> Illustrated in A.M.W. Stirling, *Macdonald of the Isles*, London, 1913, pp.110-111.

<sup>161</sup> Boswell, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1785, pp.164-175; 2nd edition, 1785, pp.164-175. These pages cover the dates Boswell and Johnson spent at Armidale, Thursday 2 September to Monday 6 September.

<sup>162</sup> Boswell, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, p.168: Johnson, "Where I in your place, sir, in seven years I would make this an independent island. I would roast oxen whole, and hang out a flag as a signal to the Macdonalds to come and get beef and whiskey".

Boswell also reported complaints of rack-renting on the estate, and of the emigration of its people, observations also altered in the second edition.<sup>163</sup> However, the changing structure of the Macdonald estate did not begin with this incumbent. It had been forfeited to the crown following the Macdonalds' support of the 1715, and was bought back by the 7<sup>th</sup> Baron in 1726.<sup>164</sup> By the 1730s plans were already being made to raise more revenue from the estate.<sup>165</sup> Macdonald's father, Sir Alexander Macdonald, 7<sup>th</sup> Baron Sleat, had earlier been implicated in an attempt to force many of his people to 'emigrate' to America.<sup>166</sup>

The 9<sup>th</sup> Baron continued this process, reportedly evicting smaller tenants from their holdings, and forcing several tacksmen and their families to give up their leases and emigrate.<sup>167</sup> Educated at Eton, something not untypical for Highlanders of his rank, his tastes have been described as 'anti-Celtic', his relationship with his clan as only commercial, and his interest in his position as chief only in what it would bring him in social advantage and dignity.<sup>168</sup> The actions of Macdonald were designed to maximize the cash profit from his land, and were not unusual. However, Macdonald's actions as landlord contradict the ideologies of the 'traditional' Highland chief, values that he sought to express in this portrait.

A similar argument can be put forward with respect to the self-image, promoted through the portraits of *Macdonell of Glengarry* in particular that painted by Raeburn (Fig. 2). Glengarry's very public promotion of himself as a true Highlander has already been

<sup>163</sup> Boswell, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, although altered in 2nd pp. 165-166.

<sup>164</sup> Macdonald, p. 85.

<sup>165</sup> Dodgshon, p. 70.

<sup>166</sup> Macdonald, p. 86.

<sup>167</sup> Macdonald, p. 100. Although many of the literary profiles of Macdonald are clearly drawn in a light that is designed to contrast his behaviour and interests with his elder brother James, these often highly derogatory comments are based upon his actions as landlord and cannot be simply dismissed. Macdonald is particularly negative and keen to contrast him with the glowing reports of his elder brother. A more positive view is put forward by Mackenzie, pp. 243-246, who discusses Macdonald's membership of the Society of Antiquarians and his interest in music, however, he does not attempt to deny evictions and rack-renting.

discussed. However, like his relative Macdonald, Glengarry was more landlord than chief with regard to his land and its dependents. The life of the true Highlander that Glengarry attempted to lead was the re-creation of a chiefly lifestyle, but one that was based by this date on myth as much as memory and actuality.<sup>169</sup> While Glengarry represented to the world the constructed outward signs of the Highland chief, he continued the process begun by his predecessor of raising rents, and clearing people off the land for sheep to raise more revenue, in order to support the public image of a true Highland chief.<sup>170</sup>

In these portraits of Macdonald and Macdonell, it is possible to witness the compounding of myth and history. The desire to represent the values of the 'true' Highlander through the symbols of dress, arms and landscape was motivated by the change from chief to landlord. In the portraits of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when a revenue-based economy had largely, although not wholly, supplanted the chiefly economy, the symbols of chiefly virtue and ideology had become replacements for those very things that had been lost. Whether this process of recovery was motivated by a deliberate desire to conceal the processes of rack-renting, loss of tenancy and forced emigration that Johnson and Boswell criticized, is impossible to address. However, in these later paintings there is an undoubted desire to use the myths and symbols that were created around Highland life after the 'Forty-Five in a self-conscious and dramatic self-presentation.

The portraits of Glengarry and Macdonald have been deliberately emblazoned with the image of chiefly virtues. In this sense they were representing the sitters as members of the Highland aristocracy, but in an extremely compromised way. The very means of representation, the portrait, was alien to Highland culture, a culture based on oral tradition

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<sup>168</sup> Macdonald, p.99.

<sup>169</sup> His hunting pursuits are mentioned in the *DNB*.

and whose artists were not visual, but were bards, harpists and storytellers. The grand manner portrait, boldly declaring the rights of the sitter over land or place belongs to the contacts that Highlanders made in the south and on the Continent, and are part of a European aristocratic expression of identity. This assertion of aristocratic identity is also found in the portraits of Macleod, Wemyss, Bute and many others.

Although there is a considerable amount of consensus that, by the late eighteenth century, Highland identity had begun to represent Scottish national identity, the overwhelming evidence of these civilian portraits is that they sought primarily to represent the sitter's more general aristocratic status. The reception of these portraits outside of Highland circles may have been different from that within. Although Raeburn's paintings were hung in public exhibitions, portraits could be seen in an artists' studio and some were issued as prints, they were not broadly disseminated during the eighteenth century.<sup>171</sup>

In conclusion, although British identity is undoubtedly expressed in those portraits whose subject matter is primarily military, or which display strong military allusions, the identification with a specifically Scottish identity in Highland portraits is more problematic. Rather, it would appear, from the evidence presented here, that civilian Highland portraits served primarily to express the sitter's aristocratic status. However, the accoutrements of chiefly Highland display that served to reinforce this aristocratic status to fellow Highlanders, had, by the late eighteenth century, also become associated with a Scottish identity, but this was an identification that was largely perceived by those outside Highland culture.

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<sup>170</sup> Glengarry succeeded in 1788, he ran up massive debts, the land was heavily mortgaged and had to be sold by his successor. For Glengarry see MacDonald, pp.483-487 and Mackenzie, pp.356-359.

<sup>171</sup> Ramsay's portrait of the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Loudon was, as we have seen, issued as a print, as was Raeburn's portrait of *Alastair Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry*, although this print is undated, see Thomson, p.152.

As these Highland portraits demonstrate, anachronistic readings of so called symbols of national identity produce misleading interpretations of both the portrait and the sitter's identity, although their symbolic reading is historiographically valid. However, the relationship between portraiture and national identity need not be confined to symbolism, and it is to other forms of this relationship that I shall now turn, at first generally, and then specifically in relation to works by Allan Ramsay.

### Chapter Three

#### Portraiture, Illustrious Heads, and Scottishness.

We have, in considering Highland portraits, seen that myth and symbolism constructed an image that became representative of a 'Scottish' national identity originating in the eighteenth century, and manipulated over the nineteenth into a fundamentally a-historical cultural construction that pushed to the fore a myth consciously constructed as an alternative and therefore anachronistic national history. If such an apparently cohesive force of identification as the Highland myth only obfuscates the question of Scottish national identity, then we may ask whether it is possible to find it anywhere within Scottish visual culture. The following two chapters will therefore ask whether it is possible to identify an artistic quality or value within eighteenth – century Scottish painting that can be associated with the national identities found in that particular society, first from a methodological and then a theoretical perspective.

In order to consider whether certain aesthetic qualities within certain paintings can communicate ideas of that nation's identity, it will be helpful to return to the definitions of national identity outlined by Anthony D. Smith. As we saw, he identified as fundamental to national identity five features: an historic territory or homeland; common myths and historical memories; a common, mass public culture; common legal rights and duties for all members and a common economy with territorial mobility for members.<sup>1</sup> For the individuals who make up this community, national identity is but one of many identities, and not necessarily that of greatest consequence. However, although the fundamental definition

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<sup>1</sup> Smith (1991), p.14.

of national identity encompasses many facets of civilization, its essential component is the individuals who share in these commonalties that form a collective identity. Nations and national identity are meaningless terms without the people that compose them.

Smith's broad definition of national identity suggests the mediums (the shared notions of culture, myth and rights which connect individuals to each other) through which national identity may be expressed. But national identity is not simply a list or series of definitions that function at a purely national level, nor is it simply a collective or group identity that defines or expresses the nation to those outside it. National identity also forms part of the identity of individuals, albeit one that connects them to other individuals. Therefore, if we accept this position, it may find expression in portraits of individual members of that nation.

It is an art historical axiom that portraiture does far more than tell us about the appearance of a long dead individual. A portrait may have a complex content, connected not only with biography, but also to politics, society, family life and power. It deals with both public and private lives – and, as we will see, can serve to express particular ideas of nationhood. While a portrait obviously aims to commemorate (two-dimensionally) the appearance of a person, it can also serve as a complex psychological, sociological and physiological receptor. If we begin by regarding the portrait as autonomous, then it may be said to represent the physical appearance of the sitter, and the sitter's personal identity. However, this is not unproblematic. As Richard Brilliant has explained, even photography is ambiguous, reproducing images which the viewer may not be able to tally with their own perception of the sitter.<sup>2</sup> The artist, in conjunction to a greater or lesser extent with the

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<sup>2</sup> Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture*, 1991, 1997, London, p.23.



sitter, and mindful of the convention and purpose of the portrait, is ultimately responsible for what gets represented. It may be argued that the more personal knowledge the artist has of the sitter the greater is the potential for the artist to produce more complex and subtle presentation of the sitter. However, this argument does not take into account the skill of the artist, nor the intention of the artist and sitter in the painted image.

As will be discussed further in chapter four with regard to Allan Ramsay, while the primary function of the portrait is to represent an individual, the medium, display and viewer all play a role in transgressing the boundaries of the self contained in the picture, and cause it to interact with the world in which it is placed. Portraits are transformed through reproduction by other artists, in other mediums, and in other settings. A portrait placed within any setting takes on other meanings. Family portraits lose much of their significance if they are removed, either physically or intellectually, from the setting of their dynastic home and the company of other members of the family. Their place in their family history is lost, and only the history of the individual remains.<sup>3</sup>

Artistic conventions can be deployed to emphasize particular facets of the individual's identity, as Divine Right was exemplified in the many images of Louis XIV which were used as a self conscious assertion of the ruler's status, succession and continuity.<sup>4</sup> Some portraits can also expound a supra identity to the sitter's own, as coronation portraiture subsumes the regent into the state as effectively as the ceremonial robes and ceremony. Naval and Military heroes are not simply heroic individuals, but in

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<sup>3</sup> For example, Michael Rosenthal *The Art of Thomas Gainsborough*, London & New Haven, 1999, pp.155-8 discusses the dynastic assertiveness of portraits of the Dukes of Norfolk in the drawing room of Arundel Castle.

<sup>4</sup> For example Charles Le Brun's 1674 altarpiece *Louis XIV adoring the risen Christ* (Musée des Beaux Arts, Lyon) is essentially a votive portrait of the French king, introduced to Christ by St Louis. Rightful succession is emphasized in Holbein's lost fresco of Henry VII and Henry VIII.

their manner of portrayal represent the triumph of the state or nation and its national interest. Through their wide dissemination, these images reached out to that ever broadening idea of the nation evolving at this time. These portraits, though of individuals, have a superimposed identity that exaggerates certain aspects of their personality to express an identity - social, political and, in some instances, national in significance. In the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds we find the quintessential exploitation and promotion of a style of portraiture that moved it closer to the intellectual ideals of history painting.

It was through history painting that the state or nation traditionally had expressed its shared ideals. These, like the rituals of the ruling elite, reinforced and imposed, from the top down, an identity that was binding but not inclusive in its formulation. In Britain during the eighteenth century there was a profound change both in the markets for, and subjects of, history painting, and it may be argued that this is related to the formation of a national identity imposed not by a small oligarchy, but through the expansion of the body politic, effectively forming a more democratic notion of national identity. Hogarth had advocated the creation of an art for a modern British nation in his 'Britophil' Essay and his choice of modern subject matter in painting and prints initiated this fundamental shift in British history paintings.<sup>5</sup> The lives of contemporaries acted as modern exemplars, marking a distinct shift away from traditional subject matter. The audience they addressed was broadly

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<sup>5</sup> The 'Britophil' Essay is reproduced in Ronald Paulson, *Hogarth: His Life, Art, and Times*, Vol. II, London, 1971, pp.491- 493. His modern moral subjects such as *Industry and Idleness* and *The Harlot's Progress* are the most obvious pictorial examples. Later history paintings addressed modern subjects, for example: Benjamin West, *The Death of General Wolfe* (1770, oil on canvas, 60½ x 84in. (153.7 x 213.4 cm), National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa); John Singleton Copley, *The Death of the Earl of Chatham* (1779-1781, oil on canvas, 90 x 121in (228.5 x 307.5cm), Tate Britain, London) and *The Death of Major Pierson* (1784, 97 x 144in. (246.4 x 365.8cm), Tate Britain, London); Edward Penny, *The Marquis of Granby Relieving a Sick Soldier* (1764, 40 x 50in (101.6 x 127cm), Ashmolean Museum, Oxford). The painting of such works was increasingly linked to their commercial sale as prints, the publication or subscription launch of which was often timed to coincide with the picture's exhibition. As Timothy Clayton notes, *The English Print 1688 - 1802*,

defined, no longer restricted to the upper echelons of landed society, but was extended through scale, availability and price, to a broad middling sort, and widely broadcast as prints.

Benjamin West's *The Death of General Wolfe* may have portrayed a dying hero, but through the use of religious formal references – as with the Descent from the Cross – the subject is morally aggrandized. Britain, through the death of her son and her policy of expansion, has triumphed over the evil of the French nation. As in Christian dogma, where God overcame evil through the death of his son, so Britain has triumphed through the death of one of her own.<sup>6</sup> James Barry's mural *The Progress of Human Culture* (exh. 1783) for the Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, linked classical subject matter to the personification of Britain's greatness in *Commerce or the Triumph of the Thames*, while the members of British society whose individual achievements had helped to promote the progress of the British nation were celebrated in his *The Distribution of Premiums in the Society of Arts*.<sup>7</sup> The great and the good who had contributed to the establishment of a British nation included women. In this mural the Blue Stocking Elizabeth Montague, the Duchess of Northumberland, and a young girl holding a sample of her needlework, represent the importance of female attributes to the national enterprise embodied by the Society of Arts.<sup>8</sup>

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New Haven & London, 1997, p.199, this commercial tie in provided conditions under which 'it became possible to paint and publish subjects that artists would never before have dared to risk.'

<sup>6</sup> For the iconography of this image see Solkin (1992), pp.209-12.

<sup>7</sup> *Commerce or the Triumph of the Thames* (1777-84, oil on canvas, 142 x 182in. (360 x 462 cm), Royal Society of Arts, London) and *The Distribution of Premiums in the Society of Arts* (1777-84, oil on canvas, 142 x 182in. (360 x 462cm), Royal Society of Arts, London). For James Barry see William L. Pressly, *James Barry The Artist as Hero*, EC, Tate Gallery, 1983.

<sup>8</sup> This valourisation of feminine values is also expressed in Richard Samuel's *The Nine Living Muses of Great Britain: portraits in the Characters of the Muses in the Temple of Apollo* (exh. 1779, oil on canvas, 52 x 61in (132.1 x 154.9cm), National Portrait Gallery, London) in which Montague and Angelica Kauffman amongst others are celebrated.

The production of large portrait groups portraying living national figures, exemplified by John Singleton Copley's *The Death of the Earl of Chatham*, demonstrates the way in which academic boundaries were being transgressed to produce an art that was more immediate and modern, and centred upon the role of the individual in history and nationhood. The individual was celebrated and immortalized for their contribution to national endeavors and for displaying personal achievements such as added to the glory of the nation. Here there is a connection with the widespread and popular collecting and publishing of anthologies of portraits and biographies.

The figure of Thomas Granger was central to this popular pursuit that promoted a nationwide interest in the collection of engraved heads. His influential book *A Biographical History of England* (1769) focused upon the individual histories of its subjects, but it also makes important connections (as did its followers) between biography and national history.<sup>9</sup> Pointon places Granger within a long tradition of collecting portrait heads, dating back to Antiquity, that continued in the collection of written biographies and portrait heads during the Renaissance, and was maintained in Britain during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>10</sup>

Granger's heads were arranged by a classification system which, as Pointon observes, replicated the body politic. His twelve classes begin with Kings and Queens and descend, in terms of status, to Class XI 'Ladies and others of the female Sex, according to

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<sup>9</sup> Marcia Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, New Haven and London, 1993, pp.53-4. The full title of Granger's book is *A Biographical History of England, from Egbert the Great to the Revolution: consisting of Characters disposed in different Classes, and adapted to a methodical Catalogue of Engraved British Heads intended as an Essay towards reducing our Biography to a System, and a Help to the knowledge of Portraits. with a preface showing the utility of a Collection of Engraved Portraits to supply the Defect, and answer the various purposes of Medals.*

their rank, &c.', and Class XII 'Persons of both Sexes, chiefly of the lowest Order of the People, remarkable from only one Circumstance in their Lives; namely such as lived to a great Age, deformed Persons, Convicts etc.,' to propose an inclusive membership of both enfranchised and disenfranchised.<sup>11</sup> Like the audience for history painting and the subjects deemed suitable for this most elevated form of painting, Granger's book (and the Grangerized book) embraced an increasingly wide notion of the participants in Britain's history.

Although Granger's book is concerned with personal histories, it was based upon the notion of a national history and identity. As with his immediate precursor, Joseph Ames, with his 1747 *A Catalogue of English Heads*, Granger's select individuals were bound together by nationality. While in other publications of this type subjects were bound by profession, or simply as representatives of their age, in general these biographical and portrait-based collections were of national histories and thus point to the individual subject as both part of a nation and significant in the formation of a national identity.<sup>12</sup> This eighteenth-century obsession with collecting engraved portraits is not simply the result of a fad initiated by Granger. Its motivations lie in the interest in the writing, or rewriting, of history and in antiquarianism; interests that are themselves indelibly linked to forming of national identities.

The connection between national identity and the collecting of portraits of individuals is also evident in the work of one of Granger's correspondents, the antiquarian

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<sup>10</sup> In emphasizing the link between portraiture and biography Pointon (1993), pp.53- 4, turns to an art historical idea that has most recently been explored by Richard Wendorf in *The Elements of Life. Biography and Portrait-Painting in Stuart and Georgian England*, Oxford, 1990, revised edition 1991.

<sup>11</sup> Pointon (1993), p.56.

and collector Sir William Musgrave (1735-1800). In working on British biographical history Musgrave made an exhaustive survey of portraits held in public and private collections in Britain in the 1790s, identifying them by subject and artist. Musgrave's purpose in this enormous undertaking, suggested to him by the antiquary Richard Gough, was to create an 'archive of images' to fill the gaps in British biographical history and complement his collection of portrait engravings. This enterprise, the results of which are known as Musgrave's 'Lists', was concerned with the British nation's biographical history, and further constituted a national survey of her artistic collections, of the nation's wealth of portraiture.<sup>13</sup>

Portrait-based histories of Scotland (again carried out by antiquarians) were also published in the later eighteenth century. John Pinkerton produced *Iconographia Scotia or Portraits of Illustrious Persons of Scotland. Engraved from the most Authentic Paintings and with short Biographical Notices* in 1797, and, in 1799 *The Scottish Gallery; or, Portraits of Eminent Persons of Scotland*. In both cases the emphasis is on the image rather than the text. The portrait's power to convey more than a simple likeness was expounded in Pinkerton's introduction to the first of these publications.

Nor has it been observed without reason, that portrait painting is perhaps equal to any exertion of the pencil, as when it displays a character really interesting, it awakens more numerous ideas of mind, life and action, than any other allotment of the canvas can pretend to inspire – it renders us personally acquainted, so to speak,

<sup>12</sup> Pointon (1993), p.62, gives the following examples: *The Portraits of the Most Eminent painters and other famous artists, that have flourished in Europe...*, of 1739 and *The Biographical Magazine* 'containing Portraits and Characters of Eminent and Ingenious Persons of every Age and Nation.'

<sup>13</sup> For Musgrave's Lists see Arline Meyer 'Sir William Musgrave's "Lists of portraits"; with an account of head-hunting in the eighteenth century' *The Walpole Society*, Vol.54, pp.454-502. Meyer notes the importance of national interests in this and similar projects, although I disagree with her that Musgrave's project can be described as 'self-conscious nationalism', p.455.

with former ages, and it imprints with double vigour on the memory the entertainment, and instruction of history.<sup>14</sup>

Again this statement reinforces the importance of the individual to the formation of history and by implication, in this series of portraits, within the history of the Scottish nation.

Pinkerton was assisted in his search for portraits of worthy Scots by David Steuart Erskine, 11<sup>th</sup> Earl of Buchan.<sup>15</sup> Buchan's interest in portraiture was closely connected to ideas of national identity, and a brief foray into his biographical history further illustrates interest in connecting individual achievement, history and national identity. The earl provides an extreme example of how the patronage of art may be linked to the patron's sense of identity.<sup>16</sup> In 1784 Buchan bought back the family's ancestral seat of Dryburgh Abbey and proceeded to form the buildings and grounds into a pantheon of Scottish worthies, an architectural 'Iconographia Scotia' that as we shall see has some parallels with William Kent's Temple Of British Worthies at Stowe, although it remains unclear whether this dream was fully realized. The intended design of this pantheon and Buchan's personal testament indicates that it was an expression of Buchan's sense of national identity.

Pride in his family's lineage, and sense of his own importance led to some radical ways of expressing his own sense of national identity.<sup>17</sup> A letter of 1809, to an unidentified correspondent, asserts that 'The Buchan family since the death of the Cardinal of York has

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<sup>14</sup> John Pinkerton, *Iconographia Scotia or Portraits of Illustrious Persons of Scotland. Engraved from the most Authentic Paintings and with short Biographical Notices*, London, 1797.

<sup>15</sup> Buchan, something of an eccentric, was a prolific correspondent, the founder of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and a patron of the arts. For Buchan see James Gordon Lamb 'David Steuart Erskine, 11<sup>th</sup> Earl of Buchan, A study of his Life and Correspondence', unpublished doctoral thesis, University of St Andrews, 1964.

<sup>16</sup> For Buchan's patronage of art and artists see Robert Mungo McCready Campbell, 'An Account of Patronage Provided by the 11<sup>th</sup> Earl of Buchan and his Relationships with the Artists of Britain, 1750-1820.' Unpublished M.Phil dissertation, University of Glasgow, 1984.

become the heir male of the Royal Family of Stewart & consequently that which is best to begin a new Dynasty with a female of Hanover.' Buchan continues to discuss marriage, in particular that of Isabella's nephew, 'I have a Fancy to make him marry the little Princess, that we may Save the Dynasty.'<sup>18</sup> Clearly Buchan's sense of his own influence and position were eccentric. This expression of Buchan's dual sense of British and Scottish national identity, articulates, as we have seen, a commonly held position in eighteenth-century Scotland.<sup>19</sup> Buchan had made an earlier declaration of his patriotic attachments in the Anniversary Discourse he delivered to the Society of Antiquaries on 15 November 1784.

I considered Scotland my native country as a rude but noble medallion of ancient sculpture which ought not to be defaced or forgotten in the Cabinet of nations because it lay next to one more beautiful & splendid [?] and larger, more polished, and elegant, but of less relief. As a Man I felt myself a Citizen of the world, as a Friend to Peace and Liberty & to Science which cannot exist asunder I considered myself as an inhabitant of an United Kingdom, but as a Citizen I could not help remembering that I was a Scot.<sup>20</sup>

Buchan expressed identification with Scotland rather than Britain at Dryburgh Abbey, through his celebration of individuals, both living and dead, who formed his personal history of Scotland. Exclusively male, this memorial took two forms: firstly the Caledonian Temple of Fame in the Chapter House (Fig. 26) (that formed part of the ruins of the abbey) and secondly a series sculptural portraits erected within the grounds of the estate. A letter to *The Bee* of 1791, written under Buchan's pseudonym Albanicus, is a descriptive

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<sup>17</sup> He was a descendent of Henry Lord Cardross of Dryburgh, the third son of the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Mar, and Lady Mary Stuart. For Buchan's family see Rev. D. G. Manuel, *Dryburgh Abbey. In the Light of its Historical and Ecclesiastical Setting*, Edinburgh & London, 1922, pp.316-337.

<sup>18</sup> The letter is addressed to 'My Dearest Isabella', I have not, however, been able to identify her. NLS MS 10279 ff.20-21. Earl of Buchan to 'Isabella' at Ealing, Middlesex dated 13 April 1809.

<sup>19</sup> Buchan's pride in Britain was expressed in a poem of 1813, *Victoria*, which celebrated the heroes of famous British victories. The tone of the poem need only be indicated by an extract from the eighth verse – 'In manly eyes a tear must start, To see thy setting sun depart: The throb of every British heart Proclaim thy Victory'. NLS MS 1676, Earl of Buchan, 7 July, 1813.



account of the estate of Dryburgh couched in the language of classical descriptions of the Roman campagna. In it he indicates his intentions for the Chapter House: firstly to stucco the room and then 'dedicate [it] to the portraits and contemplation of illustrious Scots, and to give the name to it of the Temple of Caledonian Fame', adding that 'Marcus Aurelius and Seneca are on the outside of this building. None can enter that are not true Scots.'<sup>21</sup>

Evidence for the intended subjects for Buchan's Temple of Fame, and the means he employed to achieve this work of patriotic and personal pride, is given in Buchan's prolific correspondence. A letter of 1781 from Allan Ramsay to Buchan, that finds the painter declining the honour of donating a self-portrait, suggests the type of subject Buchan wished to celebrate in the Temple: 'I return you many thanks for the honour you do me in wishing to give my portrait a place amongst those of men of genius or learning.'<sup>22</sup> Further evidence of an interest in artistic and contemporary figures is given in a letter of 1789, which also confirms that the project continued to evolve, despite such setbacks. Buchan wrote to Robert Adam 'I have made a collection of portraits of almost all my countrymen who have excelled in Science and in the fine Arts and I see with regret a blank where Sir William Bruce of Kinross is destined to hang, and which I hope you will have the goodness to fill up when convenient for you with your own...Some time another you may be disposed to

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<sup>20</sup> NLS Adv. MS. 29.3.14, f.76.

<sup>21</sup> Albanicus in *The Bee*, 1791, vol. 4, p.160. Quoted in Sir David Erskine, *Annals and Antiquities of Dryburgh and other Places on the Tweed*, Kelso, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, revised, 1836, p.65. Also quoted in Ian G. Brown, "'The resemblance of a great genius': Commemorative Portraits of Robert Adam,' *Burlington Magazine*, No.904, Vol.CXX, July 1978, pp.444-51, p.447. This article also discusses Buchan's attempts to acquire a portrait of Adam and Adam's advice to him on the recipe for an Venetian floor.

<sup>22</sup> NLS MS 8856, f.11. Also referred to in Smart (London, 1992), pp.219-220. Ramsay declined the request as the only self-portrait he had was one begun 20 years before and never finished. It was a picture he thought his children would value and was in no condition to be copied. Smart points out that a copy of a Ramsay self-portrait was painted by Nasmyth and inscribed 26 April 1781 (Ramsay's letter is dated 16 March), this painting probably relates to Buchan's request.

gratify a friend to his country and to the arts with this mark of your regard.'<sup>23</sup> The earl's Common Place book contains a list of Scots eminent in different fields that almost certainly corresponds with his intended subjects for the Temple of Fame.<sup>24</sup> Under approximately twenty-three general headings, including Poetry, Painting, Political, History, Literature, Chemistry, Law and Natural Philosophy, he listed two to three eminent Scots in each field.

Buchan's patriotic scheme continued for many decades, and in 1816 he wrote to the banker Thomas Coutts (a Scot) in London requesting his portrait, 'the nature of the collection is not one consisting of family portraits but of such individuals as have been eminent in all the various departments of life in the native country of the founder of it.'<sup>25</sup> The sitter's national identity was thus central to Buchan's collection, and had been from its inception, as an earlier (1791) letter to Coutts also impressed its centrality to the project- 'Having been at some pains for many years past to collect authentic portraits of the Men who have done most credit to Scotland by their reputation.'<sup>26</sup> From later inventories and correspondence it seems that Buchan was successful in acquiring portraits of many of those he had listed in his Common Place book, people whom he regarded as bringing honour to the Scottish nation, and whose collective identities both constituted an expression of Scottish patriotism and represented the earl's construction of Scottish national identity.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> EUL La II 588 18 (A). Buchan only acquired his portrait of Adam posthumously when Tassie used the death mask taken by Nollekens to 'make a model to match with those I have begun in Edinburgh.' NLS MS 14835 f.75. See also Brown (1978), fn.22. Sir William Bruce (c1630-1710) enlarged and remodelled Holyrood House, Edinburgh.

<sup>24</sup> This reference is given by Smart (London, 1992), p.219, n.106. NLS MS 963, ff. 83v-84r. However, there is no evidence in the manuscript that Buchan wished Ramsay to paint these portraits as Smart has suggested, although he was keen to acquire portraits of and by the artist.

<sup>25</sup> NLS MS 3391, ff. 59-60.

<sup>26</sup> NLS MS 3391, f.4, letter from Buchan to Thomas Coutts in London 10 April 1791. This letter is also quoted in Brown (1978) p.447, n.34.

<sup>27</sup> There are no visual accounts of a completed Temple of Fame, although Sir David Erskine describes a 'chalky congregation', quoted in Campbell (1984), p.16. However, as Erskine's congregation included

Buchan's collection of pictures was therefore formed with the explicit intention of expressing a patriotic bond between the sitters, their achievements as individuals and their Scottish identity, to be celebrated within a pantheon of national heroes. This sense of cohesion and belonging is reinforced by the stress Buchan placed upon the size of the portraits. In letters to both Robert Adam and Thomas Coutts he gave the size he wished his portraits to be - 15 x 12 ½ inches; these dimensions, closet size, are, as Buchan himself points out, in proportion to Kit-cat size.<sup>28</sup> As Coutts' portrait was to be a double portrait with his wife, theirs was to be 30 inches 'in proportion.'<sup>29</sup> The size of these portraits, in particular their equality and relationship to the Kit-cat series by Kneller, indicates that Buchan wished all his subjects to enjoy equal status in his hall of fame. As the owner of a set of forty mezzotints after Kneller's Kit-cat portraits, he would have been aware of the extent to which their equality of scale helped express the corporate identity of the club.<sup>30</sup>

We learn what portraits he did collect from an inventory of c1777-91. It is a list that also reveals the extent to which Buchan patronised Scottish artists: six portraits by William Millar (fl.1751-1784), some copies some originals; eight by John Medina (d.1796); seven by the miniature painter John Donaldson (1737-1801); four by James Wales (1747-95) and one by Dugald McLaurin, Alexander Runciman's assistant.<sup>31</sup> Although works by French and

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Chaucer, definitely not a Scot, this description may refer to another hanging arrangement, or a change in Buchan's original plans to exclude all but Scots.

<sup>28</sup> EUL MS La II 588 18 (A). Buchan to Adam.

<sup>29</sup> Buchan even went as far as to give the dimensions of the size of canvas that would be required to paint a portrait of this scale. EUL MS La II. 588 18 (A), letter from Buchan to Adam, 15 October 1789. NLS MS 3391, ff.59-60, letter from Buchan to Coutts, 26 April 1816.

<sup>30</sup> NLS MS 963 f.58 Earl of Buchan's Common place Book, c1777-1791, includes a catalogue of pictures belonging to David Steuart Earl of Buchan.

<sup>31</sup> NLS MS 963 f.58. The inventory also lists ten portraits by 'More'. It is unlikely that this is the Scottish artist Jacob More who was a landscape and history painter landscape artist resident in Italy from c1773 until his death there in 1793. However, a self-portrait in the Uffizi (1783) testifies to his abilities as a portrait painter. For Buchan's collection see also *Catalogue of the Collection of D.S. Erskine*, auction catalogue of sale

Dutch painters are also strongly represented in this inventory, possibly representing an older part of the collection, the contemporary painters listed are overwhelmingly Scottish.

A list of those portraits Buchan successfully acquired for display in the Temple of Fame can be made by collating the 1777-92 inventory with the list of eminent Scotsmen in his Common Place Book, although as his letter to Coutts indicates, he continued to collect into the nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup> They included, as far as it is possible to ascertain, portraits of the painters Allan Ramsay, William Aikman and George Jamieson; the modeller James Tassie; the poet James Thomson; Dr James Gregory inventor of the reflecting telescope; James Short the Optician; Napier, inventor of logarithms and Colin MacLaurin, mathematician. Archibald, Duke of Argyll and Alexander Erskine.<sup>33</sup> From Buchan's correspondence with Coutts we can also ascertain that by 1816 Lord Kames, Dr Cullen, Dr Black, Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, Thomas Reid and Francis Hutchison were represented.<sup>34</sup>

What is notable and perhaps surprising about Buchan's portrait collection of eminent Scots, is that the persons honoured are his contemporaries, or near contemporaries; it is a

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by T. Nisbet, Edinburgh, 9 and 10 December 1859, a copy is in the NLS. For Buchan's patronage see Campbell (1984).

<sup>32</sup> NLS MS 3391 f.61, letter from Buchan to Coutts, 26 May 1816 describes the portraits amongst which Coutts and his wife's would hang in the parlour at Dryburgh Abbey. This would seem to indicate that Buchan was no longer (if he ever had) displaying his collection of Scottish worthies in the Chapter House, which may well have proved physically unsuitable.

<sup>33</sup> The identity of Alexander Erskine is uncertain, Buchan may have been referring to 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Kellie, but he is not a figure of particular historical significance. The 6<sup>th</sup> Earl, Thomas Alexander Erskine (1731-1781) was a composer and prominent member of the Edinburgh musical society – Buchan would undoubtedly have known him personally.

<sup>34</sup> NLS MS 3391, f.61. Letter from Buchan to Thomas Coutts, 26 May 1816. The poet Thomson was represented in the form of a portrait bust although Buchan owned a version of a portrait by Slaughter, see NLS MS 1676, f.45. Two busts were made for Buchan from a cast made by Flaxman of the Thomson memorial in Westminster Abbey. One was intended for a public memorial at Ednam (Thomson's birth place) and the second was 'to be placed in one of the niches of the temple of Fame', letter from Buchan (1791), NLS MS 3391 f.9.

celebration not of an historical Scottish identity, but of a current one.<sup>35</sup> This Temple of Caledonian Fame is surprisingly modern, reprising eighteenth-century Scottish achievement, defining a collective identity in which Buchan himself played a part, through his personal contact with many of the names, and constructed within Buchan's personal space - the remains of Dryburgh Abbey.<sup>36</sup> Within the scheme of this antiquarian collector the remains of Dryburgh Abbey connected ancient 'Caledonia' to both the Erskine family and a new Temple of Fame that celebrated many of Buchan's contemporaries as well as past significant lives.<sup>37</sup> Buchan's temple articulated a self-consciously Scottish identity based upon artistic and intellectual achievements. It was a celebration of the achievements of the Scottish nation, and in collecting painted portraits for a physical temple Buchan was taking the fashion for collecting portrait prints in volumes and portfolios one stage further.

Buchan's celebration of Scots continued into the landscape of Dryburgh. There the Buchan erected a Temple of the Muses dedicated to the poet James Thomson (whose fame was complemented by his association with the nearby village of Ednam). The centre of this

<sup>35</sup> This may point to an implicit self-consciousness, an awareness that what had been going on, particularly in Edinburgh circles, had been remarkable. This modernity is also interesting in comparison with Lord Cobham's Temple of British Worthies at Stowe, in which the worthies were historical figures. A comparison of Stowe and Dryburgh is made below.

<sup>36</sup> Buchan was widely known through his considerable correspondence. He studied mathematics under Colin MacLaurin and attended Glasgow University. He attended the Foulis Academy and maintained a strong relationship with many artists.

<sup>37</sup> The significance of the remains of Dryburgh Abbey was made explicit by the placement of a statue of Inigo Jones in the cloisters inscribed 'Vitruvio Britannico' 'lamenting the destruction of this noble edifice' (Buchan's description in *The Bee*, 1791, vol. 4, quoted in Erskine, p.64). This statue and inscription are primarily references to, what Buchan and many of his contemporaries regarded as, the decline associated with gothic architecture. Inigo Jones was regarded as the architect responsible for re-introducing classical architecture to Britain. Dryburgh Abbey dates to the beginning of the thirteenth century and is despite additions of the fifteenth century essentially Romanesque in design. Buchan's opinion of gothic architecture can be gleaned from a letter from Joseph Bonomi in London to the Earl dated 10 May 1807 'Your Lordship is very right, in the epoch of your Abbey, and exceedingly accurate in the progressive downfall of architecture, till it came to its total corruption, which is called the Gothic style.' NLS MS 14835, ff.127-8. Further, in Buchan's letter to Adam (1789) requesting information on cementing the Chapter House, NLS T.D 171, he describes the Chapter House thus: 'This Chappel is a vault of 48 by 24 and 22 in height of the original structure of the house built

circular temple was occupied by a copy of the Apollo Belvedere in Coade stone, mounted upon a pedestal around which were ranged nine muses (Fig. 27). It was surmounted by a bust of Thomson, probably that originally intended for a public monument at Ednam.<sup>38</sup> In another area of the grounds a colossal statue to William Wallace was erected and a monumental urn inscribed to a 'Great Patriot Hero' placed close by, marking the anniversary in 1814 of his victory at Stirling Bridge.<sup>39</sup>

Buchan's scheme for Dryburgh bears comparison with the landscape gardens of Stowe, Stourhead and Hagley. Buchan corresponded with Lord Lyttelton of Hagley (James Thomson's patron) and it is possible that the mixture of politics and poetry found in his gardens is also that sought at Dryburgh.<sup>40</sup> In addition Stowe in particular may have provided Buchan with the inspiration for Dryburgh, for it was created for Lord Cobham as an expression of his withdrawal from political life, and his dissatisfaction with Walpole. Buchan may have seen himself in a similar light, for, in 1788, after his attempt to reform the method of electing Scottish representative peers had failed, he withdrew from public life, purchasing Dryburgh in the same year. William Kent had designed a Temple of British Worthies for Stowe c1735 which included busts of Inigo Jones, Milton, Newton, Shakespeare, Bacon, Locke and Queen Elizabeth, and this may have been Buchan's prototype for The Caledonian Temple of Fame. The Seasons Fountain, erected at Stowe by 1805, although quite different in form to the Temple of the Muses at Dryburgh is, in its dedication to Thomson, further evidence that Buchan may have looked to Lord Cobham's

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anno 1150 and in which there are no marks of the gothic except in three of the windows which are evidently innovations of the year 1325.'

<sup>38</sup> Erskine, pp.185-186.

<sup>39</sup> Erskine, p.167.

landscape. However, although Buchan cast the landscape of his ancestral home in the language of classical descriptions of Roman landscape, and while a programme of patriotism as the expression of national identity is made through the use of Roman models in the presence of temples and statues, there does not appear to be the deliberate telling of a narrative in the grounds of Dryburgh that is found at Stowe or Stourhead.<sup>41</sup>

The grouping together of representations of individuals whose achievements had been significant within society could therefore form visual or literary counterparts to a nation no longer simply embodied within the head of state, nor the members of the ruling oligarchy, but which now comprised a public of intellectual or artistic, as well as political and military, merit. What is also significant about these groupings of individuals is that their own identity is of central importance in the formation of this supra identity of nationhood. Their individual achievements and personal histories were central to the construction of the visual and literary expressions of nationhood.

The concern for the identity and history of the individual, and the import of that individual's life to the broader history of a particular group or society, expressed, too, in the collecting of grangerized portraits, bears a significant relation with the eighteenth century's inquiry into the historical origins of civil society. The works of Adam Smith, Lord Monboddo, Adam Ferguson, John Millar and David Hume examined the processes by which mankind progressed into a modern civil society.<sup>42</sup> They were concerned with

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<sup>40</sup> For the politics of these landscapes see Kenneth Woodbridge, *Landscape and Antiquity. Aspects of English Culture at Stourhead, 1718-1838*, Oxford, 1970, and Nigel Everett, *The Tory View of Landscape*, London 1996.

<sup>41</sup> Stowe was designed to express the political virtue of Viscount Cobham, and contrasted his defence of English liberty with his opinion that the Walpole ministry was corrupt. At Stourhead Virgil's the *Aeneid* informed the visitor as he journeyed around the lake.

<sup>42</sup> See for example Adam Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence. Glasgow edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*, R. L. Meek, D. D. Raphael, P.G. Stein (eds.), Oxford, 1978. Adam Ferguson

relationships amongst individuals and between individuals and the state. The actions of individuals were central to these accounts, in which men are described as social and legal beings with distinction and rank, and whose place in the ordering of the world was not just an external description, but part of their identity.<sup>43</sup>

Civil society was formed by those who comprised it rather than lying in the initiatives of church or state. This new way of thinking about the role of the individual, and his or her identity thereby influenced the construction of national histories. The grangerized book or portrait constituted the nation's history through portraits which identified the individual and society through the expression of rank and distinction, and through the ordering of the books into the body politic. Buchan's paintings did something very similar. The individual's identity was therefore contained within that of civil society, and as the use of portraits in the creation of national histories suggests, portraiture was regarded as a pertinent medium for conveying both of these identities.

Therefore in eighteenth-century Britain, the nation's history could be embodied in the collective lives and achievements of individual citizens, just as the history of civil society was formed by man's relationship with man, and not simply the hegemony of the state. If the nation's identity, formed by a shared history of the nation, is reliant upon a collective and social sense of the individual, how might the individual express his own identity while remaining within society? However, if national identity was corporate, how could the individual, divorced from this collective, stand alone as a representation of

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*An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767) Fania Oz-Salzberger (ed.), Cambridge, 1995; John Millar, *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks; or, An Inquiry into the Circumstances which give rise to influence and authority in the Different Members of Society*, 1771; Lord Monboddo *Of the Origins and Progress of Language* 1773-92; David Hume *A Treatise of Human Nature*, L. A. Selby-Brigge (ed.), Oxford, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1978.



national identity. There is no binding artistic factor that defines these groups of collected portraits, chosen as they were not primarily for aesthetic reasons, but more probably because of reputed or known likeness.

But there was a strong tradition in portraiture of picturing individuals to demonstrate their membership of a larger group of men (and here I am emphasizing the point that this is a gendered issue), or allegiance to a group, nation or society. The artist was able to convey allegiance, status, occupation or membership by employing certain pictorial conventions. By the eighteenth century a range of patterns of dress, lighting, background, accoutrements, eye line, and scale, helped place a sitter. Philosophers, poets and creative artists sported gowns and turbans while Sir Godfrey Kneller's Kit-cat portraits famously established a corporate identity by making its members look very similar to each other (not least through the picturing of wigs). Whether a series of artistic conventions can be identified that connect individuals at a national level is the question to which this dissertation will now turn.

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<sup>43</sup> From lecture notes given by Professor Carolyn Steedman, in the seminar series *The Subject of Modernity. Theories of the Self in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, University of Warwick, Oct – Dec 1996.

## Chapter Four

### Allan Ramsay in Edinburgh:

#### Enlightenment theory and his second style of painting.

Conventions of individual male portraits, rooted in Renaissance ideas of man and his place in society, emphasize the role of the individual.<sup>1</sup> Although this may be regarded as consistent with eighteenth-century theories of man's (as opposed to God's) centrality in the world, they were not entirely compatible with man as part of an emerging modern British nation.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of the eighteenth century the presentation of the individual self was to a large extent circumscribed by one's position within the public sphere, indeed the very lack of individuality in early eighteenth-century portraiture may be regarded as indicative of a desire to emphasize what (male) sitters had in common, membership of a public.<sup>3</sup> But the distinctive and separate public and private worlds man occupied in civic humanist theory were breaking down in the eighteenth century, and new means of defining society were being sought in political and social theory, and consequently also in painting.<sup>4</sup> It was the disappearance of this public that was developed in the portraiture of Hogarth, Ramsay, Gainsborough and Wright, although Reynolds continued to attempt to address and figure society through differentiating the sitter in an hierarchical way by age, class, sex, status and occupation in a parallel to the way we have just seen that Granger organised

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<sup>1</sup> In this chapter I am discussing portraits of individuals and my arguments are not concerned with group or family portraits. For the idea of portraiture see Brilliant. Much has been written about portraiture, in general see Joanna Woodall (ed) *Portraiture, Facing the Subject*, Manchester, 1997, for British portraiture see John Hayes, *The Portrait in British Art*, EC, National Portrait Gallery, 1992, and for the eighteenth century see most recently Shawe-Taylor, Solkin (1992), and Pointon (1993).

<sup>2</sup> For renaissance portraiture see Lorne Campbell, *The Renaissance Portrait. European Portrait-Painting in the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, New Haven & London, 1990.

<sup>3</sup> Even in private portraits man's public role was portrayed, as it was on the proper use of domestic life that man's public character was contingent, and this was demonstrated to the viewer.

<sup>4</sup> This issue will be addressed below.

society. Reynolds, the most influential portrait painter of his day, presented a modified form of Shaftesbury's extension of the public man as the humanist man of action in his grand exhibition portraits. But it may be argued this active public man was unsympathetic to the Scottish moral sense school and the portraiture of Reynolds's early rival Allan Ramsay, in which the social identity of the individual is regarded as most significant. This sociable portraiture, which dominated Scottish painting in the later eighteenth century, was not much concerned with those post-Renaissance pictorial conventions associated with the idea of the public man, for those were arguably inappropriate to the portrayal of man as social.

As John Barrell has argued, the civic humanist boundaries of public and private virtue were transgressed in the mid-eighteenth century by the concept of social virtue maintained by the Scottish school of moral philosophy. He maintains that the viability of conceiving of a republic of the fine arts which promoted public virtues, was brought into question by writers less convinced of the division between public and private virtue.<sup>5</sup> Further, he argues that David Hume, Adam Smith and Lord Kames each proposed 'a taxonomy of virtues and passions which cuts across, or in some other way complicates, the secure division between public and private', and that the function of painting became to provide not public, but social virtues, whether public or private.<sup>6</sup>

However, despite the recognition of the significance of the social virtues promoted to a large extent by this group of eighteenth-century Scottish philosophers, the foundation in 1768 of the Royal Academy in London made it necessary, Barrell argues, 'to insist more

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<sup>5</sup> John Barrell, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt*, 1986 (reprinted 1995), p.1.

<sup>6</sup> Barrell (1986), p.55 & p.2.

firmly on the claim that painting had a definite public function.'<sup>7</sup> This appears to argue for a history of eighteenth-century English art that, stated simply, saw firstly a change from the promotion of public virtues to the embodiment of evolving social values in painting, but then after 1768 a return to public values (however altered). This later phenomenon was of less significance in Scottish painting for much of the eighteenth century, and is key to identifying an aesthetic that may provide a means of describing the sitters of portraits as part of a society, that is national in significance.

The large numbers of Scottish portraits of male sitters by such artists as Allan Ramsay, William Millar and Henry Raeburn over the period 1750 to 1800, display characteristics that both bind them together, and distinguish them from portraits produced in England, for English or for Scottish sitters, during this same period.<sup>8</sup> Firstly, as a group, they demonstrate far less concern with that active or public aspect of portraiture encouraged by Shaftesbury and realized by Reynolds. Many are notable for their direct quality, a marked lack of activity and a perceptible stillness, and relatively few were painted on a full-length scale. These qualities are most notable in the works of Allan Ramsay, but their associated concentration upon the individual personality of the sitter, is, as Smart argues, a feature found earlier in the art of William Aikman (1682-1731), and later in the works of William Millar and Henry Raeburn.<sup>9</sup> For example, in the latter's portrait of *Robert Macquhen, Lord Braxfield* (Fig. 28) the hands are ~~placed in a manner that prevents action~~ <sup>relaxed and appear inactive</sup>. In other examples it is possible to observe a potential for activity either ignored or closed

<sup>7</sup> Barrell (1986), p.2. The Royal Academy was a public institution as far as its patron George III was concerned.

<sup>8</sup> Many of the paintings produced in Scotland at this time remain in private collections. There are excellent photographic records of these in the SNPG archive in Edinburgh, The Witt Library in London and the Heinz archive of the National Portrait Gallery, London.

<sup>9</sup> Smart (London, 1992), p.20. He also asserts that this concentration on the individual personality is part of a Scottish tradition.

down; for example the geologist James Hutton in Raeburn's portrait (Fig. 29) has hands clasped and manifests no visual engagement with specimens. While it will be necessary to ask whether these qualities were in fact exclusive to Scottish portraiture, they are particularly noticeable in the work of Allan Ramsay, one of Britain's most important portrait painters of the eighteenth century. While Ramsay was one of the first artists to paint grand manner portraits in Britain, influenced partly by his friend William Hogarth's portrait of *Captain Coram*, he was also one of the first to reject it in favour of a more intimate style of portrait painting.<sup>10</sup>

The portraits of Thomas Gainsborough, Joseph Wright of Derby, George Stubbs, George Romney and Henry Walton do include works displaying these qualities of stillness and concentration on the self: Stubb's portrait of *James Stanley* (Fig. 30), *Sir John Stuart of Castlemilk* by Romney (Fig. 31), *Samuel Compton* (Fig. 32) and *William Chase* (Fig. 33) by Wright, and Gainsborough's portrait of his friend *Rev. Samuel Kilderbee* of the mid-1750s.<sup>11</sup> However, even though these portraits demonstrate qualities of stillness, English painters will always, in however muted a way, show their sitters role playing, in contrast to what may be observed in Scottish works. For example, Gainsborough's portrait of *Henry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Buccleuch* while very concerned with the individual (a prominent member of the Scottish aristocracy), presents him as a 'Man of Feeling' (through his affectionate embrace of the dog) and member of the aristocracy through pictorial references to Titian's *The Duke of Mantua* (Prado, Madrid).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Captain Coram* (1740, oil on canvas, 94 x 58in (238.8 x 147.3cm), Thomas Coram Foundation, London).

<sup>11</sup> Joseph Wright, *William Chase* (c1779-81, oil on canvas, 30 x 25in (76.2 x 63.5cm), Yale University Art Gallery), Thomas Gainsborough *Rev. Samuel Kilderbee* (mid-1750s, oil on canvas, 30 x 25in (76.2 x 63.5cm), Christchurch Mansion Museum, Ipswich). A survey of portraits by these artists was carried out using the resources of the Witt Library, Courtauld Institute, University of London.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas Gainsborough, *Henry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Buccleuch* (1770, oil on canvas, 48½ x 38in (1,232 x 965cm), Bowhill) This portrait is discussed in terms of sensibility in Shawe-Taylor, p.71 and further in comparison with

Although David Martin produced Reynoldsian portraits for Scottish sitters during his residence in Edinburgh during the 1780s, for example *Lady Frances Charteris* (Fig. 34), in general there appears to have been little call for the grand public portrait in Scotland during the third quarter of the eighteenth century.<sup>13</sup> In cases where this type of public portraiture was commissioned it is in clear imitation of Reynolds or Romney or other fashionable London-based artists, and therefore the commission may have been motivated more by the reputation of the more famous artist.<sup>14</sup> However, this situation may also be related to a difference in patronage: after all Scotland's aristocratic elite, the traditional patrons of portraits of this type resided in London, and could and did employ London-based artists to paint their portraits in this manner. Therefore those who remained in Scotland must have had some reasons not to desire or appropriate this type of portraiture.

Additionally, numerous male and female portraits attest to the continued importance in Scotland of Allan Ramsay's style of portrait painting. This is significant as demonstrating that Ramsay continued to exert a strong influence over Scottish-based portrait painting for a period long after his influence in England had declined. The apparent rejection of the grand public portrait and Ramsay's continued influence are, undoubtedly, connected. Moreover, both may be expressive of an identity distinct from the metropolitan, and particular within Scottish portraiture. To understand the phenomenon more profoundly

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Titian's portrait in Rosenthal (1999), pp.241-242. I am grateful to Professor Rosenthal for allowing me to consult his work prior to publication.

<sup>13</sup> See below. This assertion is based upon surveys of paintings by Scottish artists in both public and private collections. The works in private collections were examined through the photographic archives of the SNPG, which were surveyed across much of the eighteenth century. For further details of this portrait see *David Martin (1737- 1797) Bicentenary Exhibition*, EC, Crawford Arts Centre, St Andrews, 1997, cat. nos. 9 & 15.

<sup>14</sup> The patronage of London-based and international artists by the Scottish aristocracy is exemplified by many of the paintings discussed in chapter two. Emulation of Romney's style can be observed in David Allan's portrait of *Lady Eliza Hope* (26 x 28in, private collection) in its portrayal of delicate femininity in an elevated parkland setting.

it will be necessary to examine the particular aesthetic of Ramsay's portraiture and second to consider his, and his imitators', patronage in Edinburgh.

Born in Edinburgh in 1713, the son of the poet, the painter Allan Ramsay divided his life and career between Edinburgh, London and Italy. His biography reveals a man who trained, practised and lived between these three centres throughout his life. As an artist his training and output were distinctly international, unconstrained by national boundaries in physical or aesthetic terms. He studied initially at the short-lived Academy of St Luke in Edinburgh, and then with the Swedish portrait painter Hans Hysing in London. On his first visit to Rome between 1736 and 1738 he worked first under Francesco Imperiali in Rome where he also drew at the French Academy, and then with Francesco Solimena in Naples. After establishing a practice in London he became involved in the St Martin's Lane Academy, whose aesthetics and practices were largely determined by the anti-academic ethos of Hogarth, and from the early to mid 1750s his painting drew on the work of French pastellists.<sup>15</sup>

Ramsay was unrivalled as a portrait painter for much of his career. As early as 1738 Alexander Gordon reported that in public opinion he was only surpassed by Andrea Soldi, an Italian.<sup>16</sup> After he had established his portrait practice in London in 1738, Ramsay's most serious rivals were Soldi, Jean-Baptiste Vanloo and Francesco Carlo Rusca, and the older generation of British painters Joseph Highmore and George Knapton.<sup>17</sup> The emergence of Reynolds as a significant force in portrait painting, after Ramsay's return from Italy in 1753, appears not to have been regarded by the latter as a significant threat to his

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<sup>15</sup> For a brief biographical summary of Ramsay see Alastair Smart, *Allan Ramsay 1713-1784*, EC, SNPG, Edinburgh, 1992.

<sup>16</sup> Smart (London, 1992), p.42.

position as the capital's leading portrait painter. As Alastair Smart has remarked, if Ramsay had feared competition from this young arrival he would not have absented himself first in Edinburgh and then Italy for so many years, at precisely the moment Reynolds's reputation was in its initial ascent.<sup>18</sup>

This confidence stemmed from a secure patronage base and the friendship of highly influential members of London-based British society. Soon after establishing his practice in London, Ramsay became part of Dr Mead's dining circle, which introduced him to London society. By 1744 he was enjoying the patronage of the highly influential London based Scot, Archibald Campbell, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Argyll. As Smart points out, although it seems that Ramsay and Reynolds were regarded fairly equally by the connoisseur Horace Walpole and the artist Benjamin West, it was Ramsay's established patronage that placed him at an advantage over Reynolds when he returned to London in 1753, and particularly his favour amongst the Leicester House circle of Lord Bute, the Prince of Wales and his mother the dowager Princess Augusta.<sup>19</sup> In 1763 he was appointed Principal Painter in Ordinary to George III, thus securing both future patronage and financial security.

Despite his early, unrivalled success in London, Ramsay continued to spend prolonged periods practising in Edinburgh. After a year in London between 1732-33, he returned to Edinburgh where he established a portrait practice from which he painted for the next four years, before returning to London via Italy. After a brief visit to the Scottish capital in 1745 he returned in 1747 for approximately six months, and in the late summer of 1748 he enjoyed the hospitality of the Duke of Argyll's estate for a few weeks. In 1752 he

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<sup>17</sup> William T. Whitley *Artists and their Friends in England 1700-1799*, Vol. I, London, 1928, p.57. Smart (Edinburgh, 1992), p.19. Although Hogarth painted portraits his reputation lay elsewhere and he cannot be regarded as a rival for patronage.

<sup>18</sup> Smart (Edinburgh 1992), p.24.



returned for personal reasons - eloping with his second wife - and between 1753 and 1754 spent approximately nine months in Edinburgh, his last extensive period painting in the city, although he made numerous shorter visits both before and after this date.

Ramsay was led back to Scotland for both personal and professional reasons. Longer visits may point to his renewing his practice, while even on shorter visits connections may have been made and commissions received, if not executed. It is significant that his last prolonged visit to Edinburgh, which immediately preceded his second visit to Italy, also predated his important connection with the John, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Bute. Bute's patronage began in 1757, soon after Ramsay returned from Italy, and this undoubtedly made it less important for him to seek work in Scotland.

The period spent in Edinburgh between late 1753 and June 1754 was one of the most important in the development of Ramsay's art. As Alastair Smart has observed, it was during this time that Ramsay's portraits developed from the grand mannered and remote style (which owed much to his training in Italy) exemplified by his 1747 portrait of *Dr Richard Mead* (Fig. 35), to the intimate and relaxed three-quarter length of *Hew Dalrymple* of 1754 (Fig. 36).<sup>20</sup> The drawing and use of light in these portraits also demonstrates this distinctive change in style - direct and precise in Mead, diffused and softened in Dalrymple. Alastair Smart has, in his exemplary study of Allan Ramsay, analysed 'how' Ramsay developed this softer and more intimate style, and its connections with French painting.

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<sup>19</sup> For the patronage of the Leicester House circle see Smart (London, 1992), pp.149-183, and pp.149-152 for comparisons made between Ramsay and Reynolds by contemporaries.

<sup>20</sup> The significance of this period to Ramsay's professional (and private life) was established by Smart, whose arguments over the development of Ramsay's art during this period and its relationship with French painting are given in Smart (London, 1992) pp.94-114. This visual comparison was drawn by Smart (London 1992) pp.104-105 and has been reiterated here because of its extreme pertinence to Smart's observations on the changes in Ramsay's style, as the portraits share a number of formal similarities.

What remains necessary, to paraphrase Ramsay in a letter to Elizabeth Montague, is to seek to discover the why.<sup>21</sup>

It is a truism that Ramsay's second style was particularly influenced by the contemporary French portraiture of Jean-Marc Nattier (1685-1766) and Maurice-Quentin de La Tour (1704-1788).<sup>22</sup> Ramsay praised la Tour as a natural painter in *A Dialogue on Taste*, and a pair of pendant portraits, one by Nattier and one by Ramsay, hang at Newhailes.<sup>23</sup> Ramsay's portrait of *Janet Dalrymple, Mrs St Clair* is hung within the same frame as a portrait of *General James St Clair* by Jean-Marc Nattier (Fig. 38). Although it is unknown whether the paintings were commissioned to be hung thus, Ramsay and Nattier may have been commissioned for these husband and wife pendant portraits in recognition of their complementary styles.<sup>24</sup>

The French inspiration behind Ramsay's delicate technique and light tonal range is undisputed. However, he was a critical pupil, rejecting an unnaturally exaggerated animation, effecting what Michael Levey has described as 'an almost theatrical vivacity' in La Tour's faces.<sup>25</sup> He likewise had no truck with Nattier's tendency to picture women as decorative or ornamental objects, lacking character and individuality in their symmetrical and unblemished faces. However, Ramsay conceivably responded positively to Nattier's

<sup>21</sup> Allan Ramsay to Elizabeth Montague 11 September 1760, Montague Papers, Huntington Library. Quoted in full in Marcia Allentuck 'David Hume and Allan Ramsay: A New Letter,' *Studies in Scottish Literature*, Vol. IX, July 1971-April 1972, no.4, pp.265-266.

<sup>22</sup> There is much mention of this point in the Ramsay literature, see for example Smart (London, 1992), p.110.

<sup>23</sup> Newhailes House is extremely important to our understanding of how Ramsay's portraits might have been hung, further discussion of it and the Dalrymple's patronage of Ramsay will follow.

<sup>24</sup> These paintings have long been hung together. The portrait by Nattier is presumed to have been painted in Paris early in 1749 when General St Clair passed through on the way home from Turin. It may be certain that they were pendant portraits as Ramsay's portrait was painted to match the scale of Nattier's French half length scale of 32 x 25in, rather than the smaller standard dimensions used in Britain of 30 x 25in. Ramsay was paid 16 guineas for the portrait, a price between his usual charges for half length and three quarter length portraits. The above information is taken from Smart (1999), p.178. I am grateful to John Ingamells for allowing me to consult this work prior to publication.

<sup>25</sup> Michael Levey, *Painting and Sculpture in France 1700-1789*, New Haven & London, 1972, 1993, p.195.

more direct, intimate and informal portraits, as with Louis XV's queen, *Maria Leczininska* (Fig. 39) which marked a turning point in French royal portraiture.<sup>26</sup>

Between 1753 and 1754 Ramsay painted at least thirty-six portraits.<sup>27</sup> Many of these were undoubtedly done in London, but the twenty-four or so he painted in 1754 can arguably be ascribed to the six months of that year that he was resident in Edinburgh.<sup>28</sup> This number although far fewer than he had been painting in London, is still substantial. Ramsay's production of portraits tended to fluctuate in volume: in 1740 he painted thirty-six, in 1746 only twelve. The later 1740s saw a significant increase, for example thirty-nine were painted in 1748, but in 1751 and 1752 the numbers declined again to twenty-three and twenty-one respectively.<sup>29</sup> We should not read too much into these statistics; numbers of paintings do not reflect the whole story and may not indicate a decline in popularity so much as an increase in more expensive and time consuming commissions. However, a figure of twenty-five paintings in six months does appear significant in the light of these statistics. Most of Ramsay's portrait commissions in Scotland in 1753-54 were half-lengths of 30 x 25 inches, and therefore the difference in quantity of commissions may be an indication of a difference in the demands the artist had to meet in Edinburgh and London in terms of scale, or time spent due to patrons' varying influence.

<sup>26</sup> This characterization of Nattier's female portraits is also taken from Levey, pp.188-189.

<sup>27</sup> After Ramsay's departure in 1754 only William Millar and the aging John Alexander were left painting portraits on a permanent basis in Edinburgh. It is likely that Ramsay would have bitten into the long-resident Alexander's client base and Millar's portraits were stylistically very similar to those of Ramsay to the extent that their work has been confused, he also made copies of Ramsay's work - the significance of this point will be discussed later. However, by the 1780s and 90s there was considerable competition amongst portrait painters in Edinburgh with David Allan, William Millar, David Martin, Alexander Nasmyth, Henry Raeburn, George Watson and Archibald Skirving all resident. The Edinburgh art market is discussed in full and in comparison with other provincial towns and cities in the following chapter.

<sup>28</sup> For a chronological list of Ramsay's portraits see Smart (1999), pp.413-448. Smart ascribes six portraits to the period c1752-3; one to c1752-4; ten to 1753; one to c1753; 24 to 1754 and one to c1754. Full details of each of these portraits may be found in Smart (1999).

<sup>29</sup> Smart (1999), p.421 details Ramsay's output. 1740 (36 portraits); 1744 (19); 1746 (12); 1748 (39); 1749 (38); 1750 (45); 1751 (23) and 1752 (21).

Ramsay's stay in Edinburgh mattered for two further reasons. Firstly he developed the ideas that formed his *A Dialogue on Taste*, published in 1755, and secondly in May 1754 he and his friend David Hume founded one of the important societies of eighteenth-century Scotland, the Select Society, the membership of which encompassed the young and influential literati, aristocracy and gentry who resided in Edinburgh and the surrounding countryside. It will be argued that the coincidence of these development was not insignificant. Connections will be made between the portraiture produced by Ramsay during this time and the social and intellectual milieu of Edinburgh, promoted by Ramsay and others as the 'Athens of Britain.'<sup>30</sup> An association will be established between the particular style or aesthetic sensibility displayed in Ramsay's portraits and the social and intellectual identity of Edinburgh that we saw to be inextricably bound up with Scotland's national identity. This association will also be seen to have consequences for the development of Scottish portraiture in the second half of the eighteenth century, and to have established a particular aesthetic which, while not confined to Edinburgh or even Scottish painting in general, can be seen to have particular significance and importance in this sociable society.

The Select Society is of fundamental importance to this discussion. Founded by Ramsay, it connects him directly with the ideals and issues that dominated debates in eighteenth-century Scotland.<sup>31</sup> It binds him to Edinburgh society, and demonstrates his formative role within it. Founded within a tradition of improving societies, the significance of the Select Society lies not simply in Ramsay as its founder, but also in its highly

<sup>30</sup> This phrase is used by Ramsay in a letter to Sir a. Dick, 31 January 1762, published in *Curiosities of a Scots Charta Chest*, ed. Hon. Mrs A. Forbes, Edinburgh, 1897, p.198.

<sup>31</sup> Macmillan (1986), p.23, mentions that Ramsay founded the Select Society but does not accredit this with any significance, however, an outline of the society given by Smart (London, 1992), pp.110-113, seeks to demonstrate its significance to Ramsay's life and Scotland.

influential membership, its extreme popularity and a long term influence, national in scale.<sup>32</sup>

Hume wrote to Ramsay, 'It has grown to be a national concern. Young and old, noble and ignoble, witty and dull, laity and clergy – all the world are ambitious of a place amongst us, and on each occasion we are as much solicited by candidates as if we were to chose a member of Parliament.'<sup>33</sup>

Many improving societies were established in eighteenth-century Scotland. The Honourable Society of Improvers in the Knowledge of Agriculture in Scotland, founded in 1723, was one of the most significant, and numerous smaller clubs also sprang up. The Easy Club (established 1712), of which Allan Ramsay senior was a member, was composed of young men who hoped by 'Mutual improvement in Conversation they may become more adapted for fellowship with the politer part of mankind and Learn also from one anothers happy observations.'<sup>34</sup> As D. D. McElroy has established, in Scotland, a desire for the improvement of the nation was sought through the organization of societies.<sup>35</sup>

The inaugural meeting of the Select Society was on 22 May 1754 at the Advocates' Library. The importance and influence of the society's membership is evident from the founding membership of fourteen, including Allan Ramsay, Adam Smith, Alexander Wedderburn (the future Lord Chancellor), James Burnett (later Lord Monboddo) and David Hume.<sup>36</sup> The attraction of debating with such an influential and intellectually important group of men was obviously great, and the society's membership doubled in less than a

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<sup>32</sup> For improving societies in Scotland see Davis D. McElroy, *Scotland's Age of Improvement. A Survey of Eighteenth-Century Literary Clubs and Societies*, Washington State University Press, 1969 and D. D. McElroy, 'The Literary Clubs and Societies of Eighteenth-Century Scotland and their influence on the Literary products of the period from 1700 to 1800.' 2 vol. typescript in Edinburgh Public Library (E.P.L.). Allan Ramsay Senior was honoured by membership of many clubs of the gentry, as well as being a founder member of the Easy Club, the most important of which was the Worthy Club whose members included Duncan Forbes of Culloden and Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto, McElroy (1969), pp.13-14.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in McElroy (E.P.L.), pp.144-145.

<sup>34</sup> Quoted in McElroy (1969), p.14.

<sup>35</sup> McElroy (E.P.L.), p.138.

month. By February 1755 there were eighty-six members, with numbers eventually rising to one hundred and thirty. These included the Duke of Hamilton, Lord Kames, Patrick Lord Elibank, the Earl of Glasgow, the historian Dr William Robertson, Sir Alexander Dick, author, jurist and antiquarian Sir David Dalrymple, Dr Hugh Blair, and John Home (author of *Douglas*).<sup>37</sup>

The aims of the society were publicly expounded in *The Scots Magazine* of March 1755, which explained that as the meetings and transactions of the society had for some time engaged the attention of the public, some account of its institution and intentions would no doubt be required - demonstrating the high public profile the club was enjoying. The aims of the society were clearly laid out for the Scottish public: 'The intention of these gentlemen was, by practice to improve themselves in reasoning and eloquence, and by the freedom of debate, to discover the most effectual methods of promoting the good of the country.'<sup>38</sup> The means and aims of this society were therefore rooted in both the principles of moral sense, which advocated social improvement through sociable debate and reason, and in the ideals of the Scottish ruling elite - those of promoting the good of the nation through the encompassing notion of Improvement.

As we saw, Improvement was concomitant upon the elite's reassertion of power after the Union, and involved improving the nation's agriculture and wealth to enable it to compete with England, to be an equal party in the Union.<sup>39</sup> There is therefore an important direct connection between the Select Society and its members' aims as members of

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<sup>36</sup> This information, and what follows on the Select Society is taken from McElroy's thorough research.

<sup>37</sup> A full list of members can be found in McElroy (E.P.L.), Appendix C. The original of this list, together with the rules and orders of the society, and a list of its debates is in the National Library of Scotland, NLS MS 23.1.1.

<sup>38</sup> *The Scots Magazine*, Vol. XVII, March 1755, pp.126-129. This article also laid out the intention of the society to form The Edinburgh Society for Encouraging Arts, Sciences, Manufactures, and Agriculture, in Scotland.

Scotland's elite, intentions that were largely achieved at a practical level through the Edinburgh Society for Encouraging Arts, Sciences, Manufactures, and Agriculture, in Scotland, whose aims have much in common with the Society of Arts in London.<sup>40</sup> An offshoot of the Select Society, the membership of this latter society was open to all by subscription, and all members of the former by right; it offered a practical means of developing some of the ideas and concerns central to the mother society, promoted through the award of premiums.<sup>41</sup> As the initiative of a group of private individuals with national and social motivations, a list of premiums was published in *The Scots Magazine*. The categories of awards listed describe both the areas of concern and the means by which it was hoped they could be improved.<sup>42</sup> Aside from discourses on the arts and sciences, premiums were awarded for drawing, printing, manufacture of paper, worked ruffles and bone lace edging, stockings, blankets and carpets; all of which might improve the economy of the country through the improved quality of her manufactures.<sup>43</sup> Further, the society provided the basis upon which the government-run drawing school, the Trustees Academy, was organized. Unsurprisingly, in this small Edinburgh society, many of the same individuals were involved in both of these private and governmental initiatives.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> See chapter one.

<sup>40</sup> The Society of Arts in London was founded in 1754, Ramsay was a member of the arts committee. This demonstrates his continued support of the aims and methods of the Scottish society which mirrored that of the London based one and an earlier establishment in Dublin.

<sup>41</sup> It was born of a proposal put before the Select Society and developed by a committee drawn from its members. All members of the Select Society were constitutionally also members of the Edinburgh Society, McElroy (E.P.L.), pp. 143-144 & 153.

<sup>42</sup> *The Scots Magazine* January 1757 lists the premiums awarded for 1756.

<sup>43</sup> *The Scots Magazine*, March 1755, 'The art of Drawing being closely connected with this art [manufacture of printed cotton and linen], and serviceable to most others, it was resolved, that for the best drawing for boys or girls under sixteen years of age, certain premiums be assigned.' The winner of the premium for an Essay on Taste was Alexander Gerrard in 1756, the essay was published in 1759, see Smart (London, 1992), p. 114.

<sup>44</sup> Most notably Lord Kames. For a discussion of the Trustees' Academy see chapter five, part I, although for a more detailed analysis see Brookes. The managers of the Edinburgh Society of Arts were drawn from the Select Society, and anyone who subscribed two guineas or more could be a member.

The Minute Book of the Select Society records what subjects were proposed for debate. It is a list that demonstrates coincidence with national concerns for Improvement, the concerns of the Scottish moral sense school, and the more broad debates of the eighteenth century on subjects such as luxury. Questions of pertinence to Britain or specific to Scotland were proposed, for example 'Whether a foundling hospital erected in Edinburgh, and supported chiefly by a tax laid upon old Bachelors would tend to the prosperity of Scotland?', or 'Whether a Standing army, or a militia properly regulated, be most advantageous for Great Britain?' Issues concerning manufactures, trade, agriculture, law, banking, monarchy, marriage, slavery, manners, national characters, ridicule, taxation, luxury, the arts, art academies, education, taste, and even the Olympic games were listed and some chosen for discussion.<sup>45</sup>

The Select Society was therefore the most influential forum for the discussion of issues and ideas that were also the concerns of Hume, Smith and other members of the Scottish moral sense school, and which were defining Scotland's identity in the mid-eighteenth century. Although Ramsay left for Italy soon after he had founded the Society, he maintained a close interest in it. In July 1757 both Alexander Dick of Prestonfield and James Adam wrote to him: Dick sent a list of members, 'that you may know something of your favourite child the select society & may see how it is grown up', Adam reassured the painter 'I'm glad to tell you, that our Select Society of which you were the great promoter, has been in high repute this summer.'<sup>46</sup>

Ramsay therefore played a formative intellectual, as well as artistic, role in defining and articulating the issues that concerned Scottish society in the middle of the eighteenth

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<sup>45</sup> The Minute book of the Select Society is held at the NLS, MS 23.1.1. A copy of the list of proposed topics of debates is given in McElroy (E.P.L.), Appendix D.



century. He maintained his engagement with Edinburgh society continued through his visits, and it informed the correspondence he enjoyed with, amongst others Hume. In September 1760, Ramsay wrote from Edinburgh to the Blue Stocking Elizabeth Montague 'by much drinking with David Hume and his associates, I have learnt to be very historical; and am nightly confirmed in the belief, that it is much easier to tell the How than the Why of any thing; and that it is moreover better suited to the state of man; who, we are all satisfied, from self-examination, is any thing rather than a rational animal.'<sup>47</sup> Hume's influence on the painter is clear.

It is arguable that the close connection between Ramsay and the common sense school, and in particular the work of David Hume, is manifest in the portraits Ramsay painted of Edinburgh's elite, which, of course, included those men who might typically have been members of the Select Society or the Edinburgh Society for the Encouraging Arts, Sciences, Manufactures, and Agriculture, in Scotland. In order to demonstrate the immense importance to of the moral sense school to Ramsay, who thought of himself as much as an intellectual as an artist, the coincidence of aesthetic thought in the work of Hume and Ramsay's *A Dialogue on Taste* will be considered.<sup>48</sup>

The importance of the philosophical debates of the eighteenth century, both aesthetic and moral, to understanding the history of art during that period has received some

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<sup>46</sup> Alexander Dick to Allan Ramsay (in Italy) Prestonfield, 27 July 1757, NLS. MS 3836 f.26. Letter from James Adam in Edinburgh to Allan Ramsay, 26 July 1757, NLS. MS 3417 f.9-10.

<sup>47</sup> Allentuck, Allan Ramsay to Elizabeth Montague 11 September 1760.

<sup>48</sup> For a summary discussion of Ramsay's literary output see Ian G. Brown 'The Pamphlets of Allan Ramsay the Younger.' *The Book Collector*, vol.37, no. 1, Spring 1988, pp.54-85. There are two editions of Ramsay's *A Dialogue on Taste*, the first was published in 1755 by A. Millar in the Strand as 'The Investigator' no cccxxxii, according to Brown there are only two known extant copies of this edition. The second was published as part of a series of essays in *The Investigator* in 1762. For further details of the two editions see Smart (London, 1992), p.295.

attention.<sup>49</sup> For example, economic historians have found concordance between Adam Smith and Reynolds with regard to the ideas of pleasure and preference which impinge on the pricing of paintings.<sup>50</sup> Alastair Smart has drawn out a number of comparisons between Ramsay's aesthetics and Hume's ideas. Duncan MacMillan has also pointed out that similarities exist between their writings.<sup>51</sup> Both recognize in the character of Ramsay's Colonel Freeman the painter's spokesman and free born Englishman, proud of his right to speak his mind, and in Lord Modish the representation of conventional Augustan taste. Smart also notices that Freeman's view of philosophy as 'nothing but common sense and experience methodised' echoes Hume in his *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*.<sup>52</sup> However, neither Smart or Macmillan were particularly concerned with the position of Ramsay's *Dialogue* within the philosophical

<sup>49</sup> The defining work of Barrell in his *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt* (1986), laid the foundation for art historical ways of thinking about art and eighteenth-century political theory. For a review of Barrell's text see Andrew Hemingway, 'The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt "the body of the Public"', *Art History*, vol. X, no.3, September 1987, pp.381-395. The pioneering work of Edgar Wind should be recognised here and see also Solkin (1992), pp.1-26. More recently a series of articles by Amal Asfour and Paul Williamson have re-awakened interest in this area with their discussions of Gainsborough and Reynolds in relation to Hume, Berkeley and Locke. Amal Asfour and Paul Williamson 'On Reynolds's use of De Piles, Locke, and Hume in his Essays on Rubens and Gainsborough', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol.60, 1997, pp.215-229. Amal Asfour and Paul Williamson, 'Splendid Impositions: Gainsborough, Berkeley, Hume', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Vol.31, No.4, Summer 1998, pp.403-432.

<sup>50</sup> Neil De Marchi and Hans J. Van Miegroet, 'The Smith-Reynolds connection: Pleasure, preference, and the pricing of paintings', paper delivered at the Luxury Project, Summer Assembly at the University of Warwick, July 1998. The paper was prepared for the conference 'Economists and art, historically considered' at Duke University, North Carolina, USA.

<sup>51</sup> Smart (London, 1992), pp.139-148, the research presented here seeks to build on the work of Smart. A shorter discussion is contained in MacMillan (1986), pp.24 & 26. Macmillan describes Ramsay's position as anti-idealist, a concept which does share some ground with my description of Ramsay's position as anti-Shaftesburian. However, this discussion is short and much more general than that presented here, it is also confined to drawing out Ramsay's idea of the natural painter, rather than attempting to consider its direct relationship with Ramsay's change in style.

<sup>52</sup> David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, L.A.. Selby-Bigge (ed.), Oxford, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition revised by P.H. Nidditch 1975, 1992. Henceforth referred to as *Enquiries*.

body of the Scottish moral sense school, the context within which it was conceived, and it is this that will concern us here.<sup>53</sup>

Ramsay composed his *A Dialogue on Taste* during his 1753-4 stay in Edinburgh, and published it anonymously the following year. It is clearly influenced by the Scottish moral sense school, but also demonstrates Ramsay's understanding of the moral and aesthetic debates as they been articulated particularly by Shaftesbury, and had developed over the eighteenth century. He chose to publish his *Dialogue* within a series of 'Four Essays', which included an essay on the famous Elizabeth Canning case and 'On Ridicule', in which Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks* are directly referred to.<sup>54</sup>

The *Dialogue* ought not to be regarded as a simple reiteration of Humean philosophies.<sup>55</sup> At points Ramsay expresses clear differences of opinion on subjects, and his motivations were somewhat different from Hume's, as one might expect from an artist and man of letters. Nonetheless there is accordance between painter and philosopher: Hume's *Of the Standard of Taste* includes a description of delicacy in which the physical sensation of taste, or palate, and the mental sensation of taste are described in terms that clearly relate to Ramsay's technique, a point which will be returned to.<sup>56</sup> It is perhaps not surprising that the philosopher should look to his close friend as an example, but this, as we shall see, represents creative interaction.

<sup>53</sup> Although Smart has recognized these fundamental connections the main focus of his study are the views expressed by Modish, and by implication by Ramsay, on architecture, beauty in a work of art, and the relationship between painting and her sister arts. How these views compare with contemporaries' views on such artistic concerns is also of concern.

<sup>54</sup> Other essays are *On Ridicule* and *On Naturalization*. The tracts were 'all tending to shew the usefulness and necessity of experimental reasoning in philological and moral enquiries.' In this Ramsay adheres strongly to the methods and lines of inquiry advocated by the moral sense school.

<sup>55</sup> Smart (London, 1992), p139 argues that on a number of occasions Ramsay's mouthpiece, Colonel Freeman, is essentially Humean in his expression.

<sup>56</sup> David Hume, *Of the Standard of Taste*, henceforth referred to in footnotes as *Standard*, p.236. First published in 1742, the edition referred to here is contained within Eugene F. Miller (ed.) *David Hume, Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, Indianapolis, 1987, pp.226-249.

In assessing Ramsay's thought in Humean terms, the most directly relevant of Hume's writings are *Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion* published in 1742, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, first published 1739-40, and *Of the Standard of Taste* published in 1757.<sup>57</sup> Smart even goes so far as to assert that *Of the Standard of Taste* probably emerged from discussions between Hume and Ramsay, a view which cannot be disregarded completely, even though the circumstances in which the essay was written might appear to militate against it.<sup>58</sup> Hume wrote *Of the Standard of Taste* as a quickly executed replacement for an essay, *Of Suicide*, which had been threatened with legal action, in his *Four Dissertations*.<sup>59</sup> It was not directly inspired by Ramsay, although its views probably synthesized matters raised in discussions between artist and philosopher.

In discussing the relationship between Ramsay's work and that of Hume we shall consider the form before the content. As the title implies, Ramsay's essay was written as a dialogue or conversation, a very common and conventional literary form.<sup>60</sup> Centred upon a debate between Colonel Freeman and Lord Modish, with polite exchanges involving Lady Modish and her sister Harriot, the conversation often takes an amusing and entertaining turn. Both sides are given the opportunity to lay out a valid case for their position, although Freeman retains the upper hand. In choosing this format Ramsay may also have been influenced by David Hume. In 1751 Hume wrote to Gilbert Elliot of Minto that

<sup>57</sup> David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, henceforth referred to in footnotes as *Treatise*. David Hume, *Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion*, henceforth referred to in footnotes as *Delicacy*, the edition referred to is contained within Miller, pp.3-13.

<sup>58</sup> Smart (London, 1992), p.139.

<sup>59</sup> The essay *Of Suicide* was in itself a replacement for one on geometry which Hume withdrew. His publisher would not agree to publish only three essays and so Hume sent *Of Suicide*. However, facing criminal prosecution over this latter text, it was replaced by his essay on taste. For the background to this publication see John Immerwahr's (ed) introduction to David Hume, *Four Dissertations*, Bristol, 1995, pp.v-xvii. Immerwahr, p.viii states that Hume's essay on taste was written as a completely new essay to bulk up the volume, after the publisher refused to publish only three.

<sup>60</sup> MacMillan (1986), p.24, notes that an earlier treatise laying out the principles of an empirical approach to art, Filippo Baldinucci's *La Veglia* (1684), also took the form of a dialogue.

I have often thought, that the best way of composing a Dialogue, would be for two Persons that are of different Opinions about any Question of importance, to write alternatively the different parts of the Discourse, & reply to each other. By this Means, that vulgar error would be avoided, of putting nothing but nonsense into the Mouth of the Adversary: And at the same Time , a Variety of Character & Genius being upheld, would make the whole look more natural & unaffected.<sup>61</sup>

Ramsay clearly followed the spirit of Hume's advice to provide both parties with strong arguments.

Most importantly the conversational form of Ramsay's aesthetic theory corresponds with one of the most fundamental aspects of social, moral and aesthetic theory in the enlightenment – conversation – and its communicative interactions of sociability, sentiment, sympathy and sensibility. In choosing this form Ramsay was utilizing a means of communication that was believed to encourage virtue and morality, and which in turn conveyed the morality and virtue of the ideas expressed.<sup>62</sup> Conversation offered modern society a vehicle for the expression and attainment of moral goodness, and had been promoted for this both by Shaftesbury, and by Addison and Steele in the *Spectator* and *Tatler*, publications that enjoyed immense popularity in Scotland. Its importance to society is both implicit and explicit in eighteenth-century philosophical writings. Hume frequently discussed conversation: in *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* he wrote about conversation and sympathy, while the importance of deference or civility in conversation was discussed in his.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> David Hume to Gilbert Elliot of Minto, Nine wells, 10 March 1751. Published in J.Y.T. Greig (ed.) *The Letters of David Hume*, Vol. I, Oxford, 1969, letter 72, pp.153-154.

<sup>62</sup> For a discussion of art and conversation in the eighteenth century see Solkin(1992), chapters 1 and 2, pp.21-77.

<sup>63</sup> Hume, *Enquiries*. The edition of Hume's essay *Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences* referred to here is contained within Miller (ed.), pp.111-137.

Lawrence Klein has discussed the centrality of conversation to politeness, then defined as 'the art of pleasing in company.'<sup>64</sup> In literary terms, the ideal polite text was 'not only gentlemanly but specifically conversational.'<sup>65</sup> Throughout the *Dialogue* the polite language of the eighteenth-century interposes upon the argument, Colonel Freeman begins each reply to Lord Modish with 'My Lord' and demonstrates the humility necessary for politeness and the sharing of ideas, typically commenting 'Your objection, my Lord, is very just.'<sup>66</sup> Lord Modish listens, questions and accedes to the arguments. Choosing a conversational form also made the aesthetic theory it contained highly approachable and entertaining to read. Again this wish to reach a wide audience parallels Hume's later concentration on the more accessible essay form, rather than that of the longer *Treatise of Human Nature*, which he felt excluded men of the world.<sup>67</sup>

Hume's *Enquiries*, which delineate the philosopher's view on the boundaries and offices of taste and reason, offer an important textual comparison to Ramsay's *Dialogue on Taste*, as they were matters also central to Ramsay's work. Hume argues that reason 'conveys the knowledge of truth and falsehood' while taste gives the 'sentiment of beauty and deformity, vice and virtue.'<sup>68</sup> As Ramsay acknowledged very early in his *Dialogue*, the platonic connection between vice and virtue had most famously been considered in the eighteenth century by Shaftesbury.<sup>69</sup> Lord Modish, the upholder of augustan values, asks Ramsay's mouthpiece, Colonel Freeman, 'Then you don't allow the moral duties to be the

<sup>64</sup> Lawrence E. Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness. Moral discourse and cultural politics in early eighteenth-century England*, Cambridge, 1994, pp.4-5.

<sup>65</sup> Klein, p.6.

<sup>66</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, p.17.

<sup>67</sup> In his forward to Hume's *Essays Moral, Political and Literary*, Miller argues 'it was not simply a desire for fame that led Hume to abandon the *Treatise* and seek a wider audience for his thought. He acted in the belief that commerce between men of letters and men of the world worked to the benefit of both. Hume thought that philosophy itself was a greater loser when it remained shut up in colleges and cells and secluded from the world and good company', pp. xvii-xviii.

<sup>68</sup> Hume, *Enquiries*, Appendix 1, p.294.

objects of taste. My Lord Shaftesbury is of a very different opinion.' To which Colonel Freeman makes the significant reply 'That may be; but his Lordship stands not for divine authority with me.' He continues 'there has been much unfortunate pains employed, by many authors from Plato down to Sir Harry Beaumont, in order to confound the objects of judgement with those of taste and feeling; than which nothing can be more vulgar and unphilosophical.' This last speech points up Ramsay's most important argument in the *Dialogue*, the difference between judgment and taste. Together with the idea of the natural painter, these are the central concerns of Ramsay's argument and will now be looked at before a more general discussion of the relationship between Ramsay and the moral sense school is undertaken.

For Ramsay, as for Hume, taste was subjective, and could not be a matter of dispute.<sup>70</sup> It was personal, based upon custom and fashion. For Ramsay there was no standard of taste and therefore no standard of taste in art, although crucially there was a standard of judgement, and on this point Ramsay differs from Hume. Hume believed that a standard of taste could, theoretically, be reached through a critic's judgement.<sup>71</sup> Not all people were equally suited to be critics though, as the rules of art were founded on experience and observation of the common sentiments (although not all men on all occasions conformed to these rules).<sup>72</sup> For Hume the ideal critic must possess a delicacy of the imagination and taste.<sup>73</sup> To be a true judge he must have strong sense, delicate sentiment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison and cleared of all prejudice.

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<sup>69</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, p.9.

<sup>70</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, pp.9-10 and Hume, *Standard*, p.230.

<sup>71</sup> Hume, *Standard*, p.233-4.

<sup>72</sup> Hume, *Standard*, p.232.

<sup>73</sup> Hume, *Standard*, p.234.

The verdict of this man 'is the true standard of taste and beauty.'<sup>74</sup> In the *Dialogue*, taste and judgement are clearly differentiated, and judgement is not the preserve of an ideal critic, as it is for Hume.<sup>75</sup>

Ramsay's disagreement with Hume emerges at an early point in the *Dialogue*, when Colonel Freeman pronounces that 'Whatever has a rule or standard to which it may be referred and is capable of comparison, is not the object of taste, but of reason and judgment.'<sup>76</sup> This difference of opinion might be traced to Ramsay's profession, for although he does not accept that taste can be a standard (and with relation to this he is highly critical of dilettanti and connoisseurs), as an artist some form of differentiation or judgement was necessary. His own desire to improve as an artist, to obtain a better standard, is testified by his drawing and seeking to improve through experiments with new techniques and styles. His introduction of red under-painting to his portraits to improve the flesh tones, and a willingness radically to alter his style testify to this desire to improve in quality and be judged as having done so.

Ramsay's concern with art as a matter of judgment rather than simply taste is developed during a discussion of the arts, in which Colonel Freeman states

An art has been thus defined by one of the most sagacious of the antients, *a system of rules acquired by study, and reduced to practice, for some useful purpose*. Now wherever there is a rule or rules, by which any work is supposed to be conducted, that rule, being known, must serve equally for a standard to those who would determine with propriety concerning its merit or degree of excellence. An art, then, and whatever pretends to a standard, is an object of judgment and not of taste.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Hume, *Standard*, p.241.

<sup>75</sup> In the idea that judgements can be made by anyone and in his criticism of connoisseurs and the dilettanti, Ramsay's position is close to that of Hogarth, although as will be observed, Ramsay was critical of Hogarth's treatise in the *Dialogue*.

<sup>76</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, p.9.

<sup>77</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, p.55. This section may also be referring to the figurative tradition in art, in which numerous things could be learned, from the schemata for drawing the figure to a sound technique.



Ramsay also departs from Hume with regard to who was qualified to judge. Hume, we have already seen, regarded the judge of taste or critic of its standard as an ideal figure of intellect and experience, with the ability to distance himself from his personal feelings towards the artist or creator of the object.<sup>78</sup> Ramsay's Colonel Freeman argues for the opposite of Hume's quintessential figure during a discussion on the sister arts of painting and poetry:

there is not only a standard, but one so level to the common sense of mankind, that the most ignorant are acquainted with it; and, if it is unknown or mistaken by any, it is by the half-learned, who from their own conceit, or a respect for the authority of coxcombs, have tried to undervalue common sense, in order to substitute something which they thought better, in its stead.<sup>79</sup>

This inclusive belief in man's ability to judge the standard of art (as opposed to Hume's exclusive view) is directly related to Ramsay's idea of the natural painter (discussed below). But, significantly, it also demonstrates the connection between common sense and standards of judgements, in arguing the ability of all to judge. This decidedly non-whiggish approach to judgment is antithetical to Shaftesbury, and in accord with the aesthetics and training of the St Martin's Lane Academy and the views expressed by Hogarth in his *Analysis of Beauty*. Hogarth would of course have talked to Ramsay, as much as Ramsay would have been acquainted with *The Analysis*. As Paulson has noted, the *Analysis* not only radicalized but subverted Shaftesbury's aesthetics through Hogarth's insistence that judgements of taste and beauty were matters of 'common observation', a sentiment that Ramsay explicitly agreed with.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>78</sup> This would seem to confuse his idea of taste being personal. This is also of course very similar to Addisonian or Shaftesburian 'public' man. See Barrell (1986), pp.4-5.

<sup>79</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, pp.55-56.

<sup>80</sup> Ronald Paulson (ed.), William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty*, New Haven & London, 1997, pp.xxiii-xxiv. While Ramsay may be seen to have taken Hume and the Scottish moral sense school as his model for his anti-

However, Ramsay and Hume are not entirely at odds on the point of judgement and taste. For Hume, the rules of art were founded only on experience and observation of the common sentiments, and this corresponds with Ramsay's belief that the possibility of making judgements depends on the existence of the acknowledged rules that emerge from the common sense of mankind. The belief that nature is the standard by which art should be judged is fundamental to both Ramsay's aesthetic theory as expressed in the *Dialogue*, and his art.

In his later work, *Of the Standard of Taste*, Hume argues that personal preferences are innocent and unavoidable, that there is no standard by which they can be judged. 'For a like reason, we are more pleased, in the course of our reading, with pictures and characters, that resemble objects which are found in our own age or country, than with those which describe a different set of customs.'<sup>81</sup> This point is similar to that made by Ramsay with regard to those he labels as 'natural painters', whose closeness to nature results in their being judged superior to other artists. Hume offers a philosophical reason as to why we should prefer things we are familiar with over those that seem foreign - it is due to our personal preferences, to taste. But for Ramsay it is due to our ability to judge those things we are familiar with over those we are not. Natural paintings are therefore judged highest as they are closest to nature, a standard that is both familiar and accessible to all, and not exclusive to connoisseurs and critics.

The idea of the 'natural painter' is one of the most important expressed by Ramsay, it is also one through which it is possible to trace the influence of Ramsay on a younger

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Shaftesburian aesthetic, Paulson argues that Hogarth turned to Bernard Mandeville, whose approach was at odds with the philosophies of Hutcheson, Hume and Smith.

<sup>81</sup> Hume, *Standard*, pp.244-5.

generation of artists, in particular Thomas Gainsborough.<sup>82</sup> In what is perhaps one of the most famous passages of the *Dialogue*, La Tour, Lambert and Hogarth are praised as natural painters, painters who are able to offer the viewer the most familiarity in their work.<sup>83</sup> The proper standard against which poetry or painting should be judged was, for Ramsay, nature, and because all are familiar with this standard even a servant girl could be observed to appreciate paintings that embodied it. Observation would prove Ramsay's thesis as Colonel Freeman proposes to Lord Modish that

Your Lordship has only to hide yourself behind the screen in your drawing-room, and order Mrs Hannah to bring in one of your tenant's daughters, and I will venture to lay a wager that she will be struck with your picture by La Tour, and no less with the view of your seat by Lambert, and shall, fifty to one, express her approbation by saying, they are *vastly natural*.<sup>84</sup>

Ramsay's reliance upon observation to justify his argument indicates his strong affiliation with the moral sense school; his most direct reference to which is, as Alastair Smart first observed, Colonel Freeman's warm assertion that 'Of late, philosophy has put on a more familial air, and is not ashamed to have it known that she is nothing but common sense and experience methodised; and it seems now agreed that the truly learned language is that which is best understood.'<sup>85</sup>

Throughout the *Dialogue* Ramsay rejects the metaphysical approach to moral philosophy and requires that his arguments are based upon experience and observation. In a discussion of beauty, which is understood as a matter of taste and not judgment, Lord

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<sup>82</sup> Rosenthal (1999) p.142, argues that Gainsborough was acquainted with Ramsay's *Dialogue*. In 1773, writing about his own portrait of Dr Dodd, Gainsborough described how he listened, unobserved to the opinions of ladies on his painting - this is very similar to the famous passage in Ramsay's *Dialogue* in which an experiment using the observed reactions of a girl to 'natural' paintings is described, see below. In addition Rosenthal argues that Gainsborough developed his hatching manner of the late 1750s from Ramsay's example.

<sup>83</sup> His praise of Hogarth is rather directed towards the naturalness of manners to be found in his modern moral subjects, the expression of situations and events that were familiar rather than his skill as a natural painter.

<sup>84</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, pp.56-58.

Modish ironically accuses Colonel Freeman of 'indulging his guesses' – a pointed reference to metaphysics - to which Colonel Freeman replies,

My notion, however, of that matter is formed from real observations, strong enough from their number to convince myself, tho' singly too inconsiderable, to be of weight in a question of so general a nature, or to be urged as proof of your Lordship: unless your experience happen to coincide with mine.<sup>85</sup>

Ramsay continually makes reference to practical examples, observations his readers can easily make for themselves, to back up his arguments. More fundamentally, his arguments are based on observations. For example, as part of the long, complex argument on taste and judgement, Colonel Freeman argues that

It is possible, by thus supposing certain circumstances, to bring the most different and most remote objects in nature to be compared by a common standard; but where this is not provided, reason must be pleased to leave the bench, and refer the matter entirely to taste, or private indication. It is that alone which can determine a young Lady in her choice between pink and blue.<sup>87</sup>

This empirical method, as has often been observed, was also central to his practice as a portrait painter.<sup>88</sup>

In the *Dialogue* Ramsay discusses female and abstracted, but not moral beauty. It is perhaps significant that Lady Modish and Lady Harriot play a central role in a conversation with Colonel Freeman, which initiates a discussion of the reputation of a famous beauty, Miss Molly Bright.<sup>89</sup> The conversation ranges over many aspects of beauty: as lying in the eye of the beholder; as being linked to sentiment.<sup>90</sup> They discuss why ugliness and deformity was a subject suitable to enquiry when beauty was not; why women become

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<sup>85</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, p.28.

<sup>86</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, p.17.

<sup>87</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, p.11.

<sup>88</sup> This has been observed by a number of people, see MacMillan (1986), pp.18-30.

<sup>89</sup> Beauty is one of subjects most extensively covered in the *Dialogue*, its main debate can be found on pp.12-32.

known as beauties; whether it is possible to think a woman beautiful, but not be in love with her; the distinction between beautiful and agreeable; whether there is a standard of female beauty; the abstracted beauty of Antique sculpture and Hogarth's Line of Beauty.<sup>91</sup>

Inevitably Hume's moral philosophy is far less concerned with beauty than was Ramsay's aesthetic treatise. However, the pair concur on certain points. Firstly Hume and Ramsay agree that beauty is a matter of individual preference. Asked if he thought Miss Molly Bright handsome, Colonel Freeman responds 'Suppose Madam, I should say yes; what would your Ladyship infer from my answer? Nothing more, I presume, than she was handsome in my eyes. Were you desirous of knowing what she appeared in my Lord's, I fancy you would be under a necessity of putting the same question to him, just as if it had never been put to me.'<sup>92</sup> Hume is rather more succinct – 'Beauty is no quality in things themselves: It exists merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty.'<sup>93</sup>

However, their disagreement over the existence of a standard of taste is echoed in their relative positions on the idea of a standard of beauty. As will be discussed more fully later, the *Dialogue* makes it clear that Ramsay does not believe in a standard of beauty, but Hume (in *Of the Standard of Taste*) does, albeit one again necessitating ideal conditions (as his standard of taste posited the ideal critic). He writes

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<sup>90</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, pp.13 & 17-18 respectively.

<sup>91</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, pp.14, 13, 18, 19-20, 22-24, 25-26, & 29 respectively.

<sup>92</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, p.13.

<sup>93</sup> Hume, *Standard*, p.230. See also *Enquiries* (Appendix 1, 'Concerning Moral Sentiment'), p.292. 'Attend to Palladio and Perrault, while they explain all the parts and proportions of a pillar. They talk of the cornice, and frieze, and base, and entablature, and shaft and architrave; and give the description and position of each of these members. But should you ask the description and position of its beauty, they would readily reply, that the beauty is not in any of the parts or members of a pillar, but results from the whole, when the complicated figure is presented to an intelligent mind, susceptible to those finer sensations. Till such a spectator appear, there is nothing but a figure of such particular dimensions and proportions: from his sentiments alone arise its elegance and beauty.'

When we would make an experiment of this nature, and would try the force of any beauty or deformity, we must chose with care a proper time and place, and bring the fancy to a suitable situation and disposition. A perfect serenity of mind, a recollection of thought, a due attention to the object; if any of these circumstances be wanting, our experiment will be fallacious, and we shall be unable to judge of the catholic and universal beauty.<sup>94</sup>

In this difference of opinion, it may be that Ramsay is arguing from the empirical position of an artist, while Hume, the philosopher, reasons.

Hume's only sustained discussion of beauty within the *Enquiries* points up Ramsay's independence of thought. Hume's arguments on natural beauty are conventional, he maintains that 'It is on the proportion, relation, and position of parts, that all natural beauty depends.'<sup>95</sup> And his interest in beauty is fairly confined, asserting that 'Beauty, whether moral or natural, is felt, more properly, than perceived.'<sup>96</sup> In comparison, the views on beauty expressed in the *Dialogue* are unconventional and in some cases arguably controversial, as when antique sculpture is treated thus: 'Here then, in the antique, we find a sort of common measure [of beauty], but which falls mightily in its value when we consider that it is only of a negative kind, from which no excellence, no striking grace can be expected.'<sup>97</sup> This view of antique sculpture is even more extreme than Hogarth's ridiculing of its 'misuse' by academic painters and writers, for he at least credits the sculptures with beauty, 'All that the ancient sculptors could do, notwithstanding their enthusiastic endeavours to raise the characters of their deities to aspects of sagacity above human, was to give them features of beauty.'<sup>98</sup> Given this unconventional position, can the views of

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<sup>94</sup> Hume, *Standard*, pp.232-233.

<sup>95</sup> Hume, *Enquiries*, p.291.

<sup>96</sup> Hume, *Enquiries*, p.165. Hume's brief discussion of beauty within his *Enquiry Concerning the Principle of Morals* is of only minor significance to this discussion, as its concern is predominately with moral rather than natural beauty, which is discussed briefly on p.173.

<sup>97</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, pp.25-26.

<sup>98</sup> Paulson (ed.), p.99. A visual demonstration of this is given in See Plate 1 of *The Analysis of Beauty*.

Colonel Freeman be regarded unquestionably as representing Ramsay's views on the subject?

Certain aspects of the *Dialogue* - the admiration for Lambert, La Tour and Hogarth as natural painters, or criticism of Hogarth's Line of Beauty - undoubtedly express Ramsay's personal point of view and marked coincidence between the views expressed by Colonel Freeman and Hume further evidences Ramsay's close association with the literary character. In addition, a lengthy discussion, called by Smart an 'enthusiastic eulogy' of gothic architecture, is consistent with Ramsay's own interests; a letter of July 1757 from James Adam to Ramsay reads 'I shall wish greatly to know, if you have pursued your Scheme, with respect to the treatise [sic] on Gothic Architecture, I think the Fancy of tracing it was good & promised myself much instruction in perusing of it.'<sup>99</sup> From this it appears that Ramsay was contemplating an extended treatment of gothic architecture. Finally, as Alastair Smart so convincingly says of the *Dialogue*, within it is 'Ramsay's insistence that the proper business of art is with the particular in Nature and not with the generalized ideal; propositions wholly consonant with his own practice as a painter.'<sup>100</sup> Given the consistency of coincidence between Colonel Freeman's opinion and Ramsay's own, it would seem highly unlikely that Freeman's opinions on beauty were not also an expression of Ramsay's own position.

Ramsay's *Dialogue* is evidence of the impact of the philosophy of the moral sense school on the painter. Its presence in a treatise written whilst the author was immersed within the society and culture of eighteenth-century Edinburgh is perhaps not unexpected.

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<sup>99</sup> NLS MS 3417, ff. 9-10, James Adam in Edinburgh to Allan Ramsay [probably in Rome], 26 July 1757. Also discussed in Smart (London, 1992), pp. 107-109. Smart illustrates *infra red* pictures that demonstrate that in Ramsay's portrait of James Adam, the architect was originally depicted holding a drawing of a gothic tower, as opposed to the Palladian plan of the finished painting.

<sup>100</sup> Smart (London, 1992), p. 148.

However, its premises can also be detected in the portraits Ramsay produced of this society: in a technique that embodied an anti-Shaftesburian aesthetic, and in their 'conversational' presentation of sitters.

During the 1750s Ramsay developed a delicate, finely detailed and closely observed portrait style, which Horace Walpole described in a famous letter to Sir David Dalrymple as 'all delicacy.'<sup>101</sup> Walpole's description of Ramsay's style is particularly significant as it comprises a direct comparison with Reynolds: 'Mr Reynolds and Mr Ramsay can scarce be rivals; their manners are so different. The former is bold, and has a kind of tempestuous colouring, yet with dignity and grace; the latter is all delicacy.'<sup>102</sup> This stark differentiation between Ramsay and Reynolds is important as it points to contemporary recognition of each following his own path, although even Reynolds looked to Ramsay in some of his portraits.<sup>103</sup> This has to be expected as Reynolds's painting and aesthetic theories are grounded in those of Shaftesbury while Ramsay, as we have seen, expressed decidedly anti-Shaftesburian views.

It has already been acknowledged that in the early 1750s Ramsay's style was influenced by French portraiture. It will be argued here that it was also affected by aesthetics and philosophy; it having already been observed that the empirical methodology on which the philosophers of the moral sense school based their arguments finds concurrence with the closely observed portraits of Ramsay.

<sup>101</sup> Quoted in Smart (London, 1992), p.150.

<sup>102</sup> Quoted in Smart (London, 1992), p.150.

<sup>103</sup> Reynolds's unfinished portrait of *Miss Kitty Fisher* (c1760, private collection), as Shawe-Taylor, p.108, points out, owes much to Ramsay's *Lady Fox-Strangeways* (1761, private collection). Nicholas Penny (ed.), *Reynolds*, EC, RA, 1989, p.23, notes that Reynolds's portraits of women are often similar in composition to those Ramsay painted after his return from Italy in 1757. Penny also argues that Reynolds admired Ramsay's paintings, and that he made a copy on one occasion.



The first point to be addressed is why Ramsay should choose a style that had the potential to be controversial. Minuteness in painting was decried by an influential group of critics who opposed it, particularly as detected in Dutch paintings which epitomized this quality.<sup>104</sup> Harry Mount has shown how 'minute' was used disparagingly both by Shaftesbury and Reynolds to describe high finishing, or less commonly to refer to small paintings or figures in paintings. But more normally it was used to denote a style in which the subject was painted in great detail. Here the debate contributed to the promotion of the idea that in painting aesthetic elevation lay in the representation of ideal or generalized forms.<sup>105</sup>

Ramsay's art and *A Dialogue on Taste* make it clear that he disagreed with this assessment of the relative merits of particularized and generalized form. The most iconic forms of idealized or abstracted and generalized art were in the eighteenth century classical marble statues, conventionally regarded as representing the ideal of beauty. In his *Dialogue* Ramsay expresses a negative view of this classical ideal of beauty, regarding it as simply the least likely to offend or please.<sup>106</sup> Ramsay argues that the statues are not beautiful in themselves, but for artists became beautiful simply through the habit of looking at them: 'Here then, in the antique, we find a sort of common measure, but which falls mightily in its value when we consider that it is only of a negative kind, from which no excellence, no striking grace can be expected: and likewise that, imperfect as it is, it is known only to a

<sup>104</sup> Harry Mount, 'Morality, microscopy and the moderns: the meaning of minuteness in Shaftesbury's theory of painting,' *British Journal of Eighteenth Century Studies*, vol. 21, 2, Autumn 1998, pp.125-141. In *The Idler* 79 (20 October 1759) Reynolds described Dutch art as 'a literal truth and a minute exactness in the detail...of nature, modified by accident.' Horace Walpole was similarly unimpressed referring to it as 'the drudging mimicry of nature's most uncomely coarseness.' Walpole was quoted in Thomas Martyn, *The English Connoisseur*, London, 1766, I, iii. I am grateful to Michael Rosenthal for drawing my attention to these remarks which are quoted on p.40 of his 'The Rough and the Smooth: Rural Subjects in Later-Eighteenth-Century Art,' in M. Rosenthal, C. Payne, and S. Wilcox, *Prospects for the Nation: Recent Essays in British Landscape, 1750-1880*, New Haven & London, 1997, pp.37-59.

<sup>105</sup> Mount, pp.125-126.

few, perhaps not one in a hundreds of those who talk about regular features.<sup>107</sup> Ramsay's delicate style fitted this comparative iconoclasm.

Shaftesbury had provided the most influential early eighteenth-century disparagement of minuteness in painting. In 'Sensus communis' Shaftesbury states

Now the Variety of Nature is such, as to distinguish every thing she forms, by a *peculiar* original Character; which, if strictly observ'd, will make the Subject appear unlike to any thing extant in the World besides. But this Effect the good Poet and Painter seek industriously to prevent. They hate *Minuteness*, and are afraid of *Singularity*; which wou'd make their Images, or Characters, appear capricious and fantastical. The mere Face-Painter, indeed, has little in common with the Poet; but, like the mere Historian, copies what he sees, and minutely traces every Feature, and odd Mark. 'Tis otherwise with the men of Invention and Design. 'Tis from the *many* Objects of Nature, and not from a *particular-one*, that those Genius's form the Idea of their Work.<sup>108</sup>

Setting aside any critically negative stance, Shaftesbury's comments on 'the mere face-Painter' would seem to exemplify the stylistic differences between Reynolds and Ramsay.

Although Ramsay could never be accused of merely copying what he sees, his capacity, thanks to the finesse of his brushwork, to trace 'every Feature and odd Mark' does distinguish his work from the more usual broad brush strokes of earlier and contemporary portrait painters. Kneller utilized the broad brush, as did Ramsay's antecedents in Scotland, Sir John Medina and William Aikman. Evidence of Ramsay's desire to paint 'particular nature' is most often epitomized by the portrait of his second wife *Margaret Ramsay* of c1758-59, however, his earlier half-length portrait of *David Hume* (Fig. 40) offers the viewer even more minute observations of the face of the philosopher.<sup>109</sup> In the inner corner of Hume's eye, the redness is painted in three or four different distinct tones, crow's feet

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<sup>106</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, pp.23-25.

<sup>107</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, pp.25-26. His opinion of these canonical statues may have been influenced by Hogarth, who demystified classical icons by replacing them with amongst others harlots and preachers in his modern moral subjects, see Paulson (ed.), p. xxii.

<sup>108</sup> Quoted in Mount, p.126.

appear around the eye and the eyebrows are painted so finely that individual hairs are visible. All these individual elements draw attention to the eyes and face, a process assisted by the large block of dull brown colour that forms the majority of Hume's costume and which contrasts with the reflective light of the face. However, a subtle overall tonality is maintained through an ornate, flowered waistcoat and white cravat that join the head and body both physically and in terms of colour and luminosity. This painting also suggests that Ramsay used minuteness and detail selectively, rather than as an overall effect.

Close examination of portraits in Ramsay's 'second' style demonstrates how much attention he paid to the particular, the significance he placed on detail is also evident in the fine and detailed chalk drawings he made, of sitter's hands in particular. His study for the hands of *Mary Adam* (Fig. 41) is concerned with attaining anatomical correctness in the holding of a pair of spectacles or a book, Ramsay being careful to show not only the play of light and shadow, but also the bones and muscles, and the folds of the flesh as they rest upon a surface.<sup>110</sup> The preparatory chalk studies of the hands of *Hew Dalrymple, Lord Drummore*, (Fig. 42) made for the famous three-quarter length portrait (Fig. 36) are based upon keen observation. They also exhibit little reference to classical ideals, or Renaissance human perfection, being essentially stubby and flabby.<sup>111</sup> In this drawing of the sitter's right hand (that which rests upon his leg in the portrait), the index and centre fingers lie naturally together, overlapping each other in what must be an observed personal tendency. The creases of the skin and its fleshiness are shown, as is the light reflecting off the finger nails.

<sup>109</sup> Allan Ramsay, *Margaret Ramsay* (c1758-59, oil on canvas, 29¼ x 25in (74.3 x 61.9cm), NGS).

<sup>110</sup> Ramsay's drawings are reproduced in Smart (1999).

<sup>111</sup> National Gallery of Scotland, department of prints and drawings, D2069v, red and white chalk on a heavy brown paper.

The three-quarter length portrait of Dalrymple (Fig. 36), for which these drawings were made, also exemplifies Ramsay's selective use of detail. Painted in 1754, the same year as the first portrait of Hume, it indicates precisely how Ramsay was deploying detail in his work: concentrating on the hands and face, emphasizing these important areas of character and playing down other elements in the picture in contrast. The selective use of light and colour also served to draw the viewer to the face and hands. In the case of Dalrymple this last point is exemplified by the overarching tonality of the picture, which, with the exception of the bright red hue of the chair, is very subdued, absorbing the light in contrast with the reflective and well lit face of the sitter.

By highlighting and concentrating brushwork on the face, an effect exaggerated by reducing other components of the painting that in works by other artists might be expected to attract attention (for example Gainsborough's attention to costume), Ramsay was insisting on an engagement with the particularities of the sitter. This technique was later developed by Henry Raeburn, when tonality was reduced to blocks of colour. For example, in what is by composition and tonality a typical portrait by Raeburn, *Dr William Robertson* (Fig. 43) of 1792, the muted tones of dark blacks of his robes, the blue-greys of books and indistinct drapery, serve to accentuate the redness of the fabric of the chair on which the principal is seated. The boldness of this colouration pushes the black-robed body of the sitter out from the indistinct background, contrasting not only with the black costume but also the bright flesh tones of the sitter's hands and face.<sup>112</sup> The ageing process is evident on the exposed parts of the body, which are painted in a variety of tones. Though the application of paint is very different from Ramsay's, Raeburn's work echoes the former's concentration on, and illumination of, face and hands through contrasting detailed and cursory observation.

In their minute observation of the physical person, whether it be appearance, or as was observed in the hands of Hew Dalrymple habit, Ramsay's paintings demonstrate his dismissal of Shaftesbury's critical view of minuteness in painting. Shaftesbury disliked minuteness because he believed that it threatened not only the integrity of the painting, but also its capacity to convey moral truths.<sup>113</sup> In this civic humanist theory of painting, pictures could contribute to the morality of society through the promotion of civic values in both their subject matter and formal characteristics. Minuteness impeded this as it underlined the materiality of the painted surface.<sup>114</sup> But Ramsay was not a civic moralist; his society, audience and viewer were not a tightly defined elite of landed aristocracy. His spectator was inclusive, for all were able to judge that which was close to nature, the standard of art.

As one of the central arguments in the *Dialogue*, Ramsay's belief in nature as the standard of art, and his consequent admiration for La Tour, Hogarth and Lambert, as natural painters, further demonstrates the contrasting positions of Ramsay and Shaftesbury.<sup>115</sup> Although Ramsay's natural painter and mimesis are not interdependent, it is clear that the natural, was also a mimetic, painter.<sup>116</sup> Colonel Freeman supports the Aristotelian view of art as mimetic, arguing that Aristotle 'has defined those arts [painting and poetry], "arts of imitation", and his definition, though often obscured and confounded by more modern connoisseurs, has never been contradicted by any.' It is an argument that again places

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<sup>112</sup> The provenance and circumstances of this painting are given in Thomson, pp.96-97.

<sup>113</sup> Mount, p.129.

<sup>114</sup> Mount, pp.131-132.

<sup>115</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, p.57. This is discussed above in relation to the famous experiment with a tenant's daughter.

<sup>116</sup> This affiliation probably explains why Ramsay felt obliged to explain more fully his inclusion of Hogarth in his list of natural painters.

Ramsay in opposition to Shaftesbury, who in the *Characteristicks* specifically argued against art as mimetic, asserting that it should be directed to the mind rather than to the eye.

Hume appears to share Ramsay's belief that art ought to be mimetic, that it should be natural. In his 1741 essay *Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion* he wrote of the importance of a knowledge of human nature to the critic. 'In order to judge aright of a composition of genius, there are so many views to be taken in, so many circumstances to be compared, and such a knowledge of human nature requisite, that no man, who is not possessed of the soundest judgment, will ever make a tolerable critic in such performances.'<sup>117</sup>

The central premises of the *Dialogue*, that art was a matter of judgement rather than taste, and that the standard of art was nature, were, as Ramsay frequently sought to exemplify, practicable and observable. As Ramsay recognized, these ideas were as important for portrait painting as they were to the manners painted by Hogarth or the landscapes of Lambert; that they had important connotations for the idea of resemblance in portraiture, 'It requires first eyes to see, and then judgement to compare the exhibited image with that of the absent subject, which is stored up in the remembrance, and is plainly a reflective and compound operation of the mind.'<sup>118</sup> For Ramsay, then, it was vital that any sort of painting be recognizable as that which it sought to represent in visual, as opposed to intellectual, terms. Shaftesbury's urge to abstract and generalize, which Reynolds took up, would inhibit this faculty, while the minuteness and detail of Ramsay's second style would seem to facilitate it.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Hume, *Delicacy*, p.6.

<sup>118</sup> Ramsay, *Dialogue*, p.58.

<sup>119</sup> For Reynolds's views see his *Discourses on Art*, in particular Discourse III. Reynolds's position may be exemplified by the following quotation - 'The wish of the genuine painter must be more extensive: instead of endeavouring to amuse mankind with the minute neatness of his imitations, he must endeavour to improve them by the grandeur of his ideas; instead of seeking praise, by deceiving the superficial sense of the spectator, he must strive for fame, by captivating the imagination', Discourse III, p.42.

To illustrate this we might consider his 1754 portrait of the architect *James Adam* (Fig. 44) that was painted whilst James was living with his brother Robert and his mother in Edinburgh's Canongate, and Ramsay was visiting the city. James enjoyed a reputation for his fashionable appearance, a member of Edinburgh's smart young set - perfumed, dressed in embroidered coats and carrying India canes - he was said by the diarist Alexander Carlyle to rise late and to have a 'very tedious toilette.'<sup>120</sup> This portrait communicates James's attention to his appearance in the careful drawing of lace cuffs, beneath whose translucent finery delicate and finely painted hands emerge. In this portrait and that of his mother *Mary Adam* (Fig. 45), also of 1754, the artist has produced an image that is exceptionally smooth and highly finished, with the delicacy and details of the face and hands privileged through a highly restricted tonal range. However, not all Ramsay's paintings from this period were so highly finished, as exemplified by the much broader, more fluid *General Sir John St Clair* (Fig. 46). This broader texture prevents the details of *St Clair's* military coat from detracting from the head, which although painted with more evident breadth retains the detailed lines, brows and shadows that identify the individual.

Ramsay's painterly anti-Shaftesburian aesthetic bears powerful comparison with Hume's theoretical one. In 1741 Hume published in his *Essays, Moral, and Political* a short essay entitled *Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion*, he further explored the idea of taste in *Of the Standard of Taste* of 1757. Here Hume wrote with regard to delicacy,

It is acknowledged to be the perfection of every sense or faculty, to perceive with exactness its most minute objects, and allow nothing to escape its notice and observation. The smaller the objects are, which become sensible to the eye, the finer is that organ, and the more elaborate its make and composition. A good palate is not tried by strong flavours; but by a mixture of small ingredients, where we are still sensible of each part, notwithstanding its minuteness and confusion with the rest. In

<sup>120</sup> This description of Edinburgh's *jeunesse dorée* and the quotation from Carlyle, are taken from John Fleming, *Robert Adam and his Circle in Edinburgh and Rome*, London, 1962, p.87.

like manner, a quick and acute perception of beauty and deformity must be the perfection of our mental taste; nor can a man be satisfied with himself while he suspects, that any excellence or blemish in a discourse has passed him unobserved. In this case, the perfection of the man, and the perfection of the sense or feeling, are found to be united.<sup>121</sup>

For Hume therefore, the most finished object was the pinnacle of perfection.<sup>122</sup>

The perception of details, the observation of every minutiae of language or appearance therefore connects aesthetics with morality, for it parallels the perfection of man's moral sense with his physical senses. Further, delicacy of taste was vital to man, as it was through the experience of the senses that standards of morality and beauty were known. This idea is expressed not only with regard to morality but also with regard to the critic, Hume arguing that 'When the critic has no delicacy, he judges without any distinction', the finer touches passing by unnoticed.<sup>123</sup> More generally, for Hume 'a delicate taste of wit or beauty must always be a desirable quality; because it is the source of all the finest and most innocent enjoyments, of which human nature is susceptible.'<sup>124</sup>

Therefore, while Shaftesbury believed that minuteness obscured moral truth in painting, Hume maintained that delicacy of taste correlated with a heightened moral sense. Hume's comments on the relationship between moral sense and delicacy have obvious implications for the viewer of a work of art, for a man whose delicacy of taste would require the close inspection of fine detail. The ability to feel or perceive at such a minute level being a demonstration of the viewers' abilities to make judgements of taste and morality.

In *Of the Standard of Taste*, Hume makes direct painterly allusions on the subject of minuteness and morality, arguing that our judgments are improved by practice through the

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<sup>121</sup> Hume, *Standard*, p.236.

<sup>122</sup> Hume, *Standard*, p.238.

<sup>123</sup> Hume, *Standard*, p.241.

<sup>124</sup> Hume, *Standard*, p.236.



comparison of objects.<sup>125</sup> He states 'The coarsest daubing contains a certain lustre of colours and exactness of imitation, which are so far beauties, and would affect the mind of a peasant or Indian with the highest admiration.' In this sentence we see the importance placed by Hume on imitation, which concurs with Ramsay's Aristotelian view of art as mimetic. Hume continues: 'A great inferiority of beauty gives pain to a person conversant in the highest excellence of the kind, and is for that reason pronounced a deformity: As the most finished object, with which we are acquainted, is naturally supposed to have reached the pinnacle of perfection, and to be entitled to the highest applause.'<sup>126</sup> For Hume 'finish' was desirable, for Shaftesbury it was part of the negative definition of minuteness. For Hume then, refinement of finish and exactness of imitation are necessary for perfection in a work of art. However, taste and beauty lie not in the objects themselves, but the viewer of those objects who is best able to recognize this perfection if possessed of a delicacy of taste. Through these philosophical precepts we can describe Ramsay's delicate technique as demonstrating both morality and taste, and reason that the viewer is in possession of these same qualities.

The viability of the competency of the spectator with regard to sense morality and taste is discussed by Hume in *Of the Standard of Taste*. Not all possess the ability in equal measure, and those who are able to sense most acutely are described as having a delicacy of taste. Moral sense is gained through this same sensitivity.<sup>127</sup> Following Hume's arguments, if the spectator views a painting, delicacy of taste may only be fulfilled if the details and finish which the delicate of taste are able to perceive are present. Without these

<sup>125</sup> Hume, *Standard*, p.238.

<sup>126</sup> Hume, *Standard*, p.238. The broad daubs and generalized forms are characteristic of the work of Reynolds, and relate to his adherence to the ideals of abstraction in art discussed in his *Discourses*. However, in the works of Ramsay, and later Gainsborough, we find a delicacy of touch, a minuteness of detail, although in the case of Gainsborough an unfinished painterly surface.

qualities there is deformity. By painting in a finely detailed and delicate style, Ramsay enabled the delicacy of taste of the viewer to be exercised and demonstrated. This delicacy of taste is also possessed by the sitter of the portrait and the artist.

This idea is of course the re-expression of the long established notion that taste in fine art was related to the moral health of the individual or group of individuals, also one of Shaftesbury's main concerns. Hume's inclusion of 'delicacy' as one of the factors in man's refinement is also found in his essay *Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion*, where he argued that a 'cultivated taste for the polite arts' improved one's sensibility 'for all the tender and agreeable passions' and rendered 'the mind incapable of the rougher and more boisterous emotions.'<sup>128</sup> So, by looking at a painting of refinement and delicacy we are improved, morally.

Finally, the connection between the style of painting Ramsay developed in Edinburgh in the early 1750s and the idea of delicacy may be advanced further if we notice Hume's statement that 'a delicacy of taste is favourable to love and friendship, by confining our choice to few people, and making us indifferent to the company and conversation of the greater part of men.' He continues,

One that has well digested his knowledge both of books and men, has little enjoyment but in the company of a few select companions. He feels too sensibly, how much all the rest of mankind fall short of the notions which he has entertained. And, his affections being thus confined within a narrow circle, no wonder he carries them further, than if they were more general and un-distinguished.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> An idea developed extensively by Adam Smith in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*.

<sup>128</sup> Hume, *Delicacy*, p.6.

<sup>129</sup> Hume, *Delicacy*, pp.7-8.

This selection of company, enjoyed by men of delicacy, found physical expression in the Select Society founded by Hume and Ramsay, and in the significance of sociable intimacy to the portraits Ramsay painted.

Thus far we have discussed the importance of conversation to Ramsay, its central role in polite society and the moral sense school, the connection between Ramsay's painting technique and contemporary ideas of taste and virtue, and the role played by social interaction in the development of these personal attributes. It will now be argued that not only Ramsay's delicate technique but his very style of painting were informed by the ideas of morality, virtue and sociability associated with both the Scottish moral sense school, and Edinburgh society itself.

In the 1750s Edinburgh was confined to a very limited geographic area, stretching from the castle in the west to the palace of Holyrood in the east. Development to the north was prevented by a loch whose drainage, proposed in 1752, did not begin until 1759, although to the south of the college, along Bristow and Potter Row (Fig. 47), some development had occurred.<sup>130</sup> Contemporary descriptions describe the close living quarters of the high street and its closes and wynds, although the Canongate offered grand and spacious accommodation for her most eminent inhabitants.<sup>131</sup>

The men and women Ramsay painted in Edinburgh during 1753 and 1754 were tied by familial relations, through profession or membership of private clubs and societies, and linked by the easy familiarity found within the confines of the old town of Edinburgh.

<sup>130</sup> The physical development of Edinburgh in the eighteenth century is described most thoroughly by A.J. Youngson, *The Making of Classical Edinburgh*, Edinburgh, 1966 (reprinted 1967).

<sup>131</sup> The most accessible account of Edinburgh life based upon contemporary accounts can be found in Henry Grey Graham, *The Social Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1899, 5<sup>th</sup> edition 1969, pp.81-126. Reprints of various nineteenth-century accounts also contain vivid descriptions of life in the Old Town. See Robert Chambers *Traditions of Edinburgh*, first published 1824, reprint of 1868 edition, Edinburgh 1996.

Evidence of this warm social interaction appears in the portrait engravings of John Kay, whose caricatures are observed with such subtlety that the identification of the sitter would be problematic without personal knowledge. For example, in one portrait group John Davidson, a Writer to the Signet, converses with his life long friend the advocate Lord Henderland, watched by George Paton a bibliographer and antiquary, whilst a little aside stands Dr Hutton, probably explaining a point of science to Lord Monboddo (Fig. 48). In another example (Fig. 49), Major Andrew Fraser, the Hon. Andrew Erskine and Sir John Whitefoord engage in polite conversation, although a different style of drawing reduces the ladies to anonymity and insignificance.<sup>132</sup>

In Edinburgh between 1753 and 1754, Ramsay painted many leading figures of its society. His sitters included members of the aristocracy and gentry, for example the sisters *Lady Walpole Wemyss* (Fig. 50) and *Lady Helen Wemyss* (Fig. 51), *Charles, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Elgin* and *Lady Elizabeth Tinwald*, those connected with the legal profession (lawyers and advocates), and members of the literati including David Hume (Fig. 40).<sup>133</sup> But his sitters were not confined to the elite of society. The Edinburgh banker *Mr William Hog of Newliston* sat, as did his wife *Mrs Jean Hog* (Figs. 52 & 53). *John Campbell of Achalater* (1715-91), factor and chamberlain to the Earl of Bredalbane, and a member of the Select

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Descriptions of the city are also contained within Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*, first published 1771, various editions, Hertfordshire, 1995.

<sup>132</sup> Kay's portrait prints are reproduced in Hugh Paton, *A Series of Original Portraits and Caricature etchings by the late John Kay, miniature painter in Edinburgh with Biographical sketches and anecdotes*, 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1842. According to the biographical notes, the small creature with a tail in the background of this print is an allusion to Monboddo's 'eccentric notions of the original state of the human species, vol. I, part II, p.248.

<sup>133</sup> The circumstances surrounding the Wemyss's commissions are unclear. However, it has been suggested (Smart (1999) pp. 194 & 97) that the sisters' brother, Francis Charteris, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Wemyss was responsible for the commission, however, no firm evidence exists. What is known is that the pendant portraits were commissioned the year that both sisters married and left the family home. *Charles, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Elgin* (1754, oil on canvas, 30 x 25in (76.2 x 63.5cm), The Earl of Elgin & Kincardine KT), *Lady Elizabeth Tinwald* (1754, oil on canvas, 30½ x 25¼in (76.2 x 63.5cm), The Sutherland Trust).

Society, and *Colonel Robert Douglas* were also portrayed.<sup>134</sup> These men and women were often known to Ramsay personally, his ability to attract men of rank and position to a club of his making demonstrating his position within the society he portrayed. Many of these paintings are therefore not simply of individuals who belonged to a particular community, but portraits of individual members of Edinburgh society painted by a central member of it. In a social sense Ramsay's paintings are therefore not those of an outside observer, but rather of an insider.

I shall propose that Ramsay's Edinburgh portraits are designed to embody and communicate ideas of social virtue. So, although costume allows us to recognize the sitters' roles as a public man, as with a judge or an advocate, or a private man, dressed in polite dress which demonstrates no particular role within society, in these portraits such factors are subordinate to the communication of the above values.

Here the work of John Barrell, particularly his discussion of the transgression of the boundaries of public and private virtue (mentioned above), is acutely pertinent. Barrell argues that Scottish writers of the moral sense school disrupted traditional humanist notions of public and private by separating

the hard virtues of heroism from the softer virtues of universal benevolence: the former, once prized as public and disinterested, are represented as self-directed, and those once recognised as disinterested but private are grouped alongside those which manifest a comprehensive public spirit so that all 'social' virtues may now claim to be 'public'.<sup>135</sup>

Further, the consequent altered perceptions of public and private virtues mid-century, led the highest genres of painting and literature to teach social rather than specifically public

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<sup>134</sup> *John Campbell of Achalater* (1754, oil on canvas, 30 x 24in, private collection). A receipt for a second payment of six guineas for Achalater's portrait is signed and dated by Ramsay, 17 June 1754 in Edinburgh, Smart (1999), p.87. *Colonel Robert Douglas* (1754, oil on canvas, 30½ x 25½in (76.2 x 63.5cm), private collection).

virtue.<sup>136</sup> However, amongst the lower genres of painting, and specifically portraiture, this shifting of the boundaries of public and private was also of great significance. Although the dangers of seeing this public- social- public function of art as linear have been made clear elsewhere, the emergence of the importance of social virtues in the middle decades is apparent.<sup>137</sup> Both the time frame and cultural origins of this change place the work of Ramsay potentially at the centre of this promotion of social values in art. It will be argued that the values associated with the portraits Ramsay painted of members of Scottish society in the period 1753-54 are early indicators of this social function of art.

In 1930 Edgar Wind discussed Hume's critique of heroic action - that it is of benefit chiefly to those who perform it, and not the inhabitants of the country at large- and its defence by James Beattie and Samuel Johnson. As Wind argues, Reynolds's position within the debate was made most eloquently by his allegorical portrait of Beattie, *The Triumph of Truth*, in which Hume is hardly valorized.<sup>138</sup> The heroic, public virtues that Reynolds sought to express in many of his male portraits, in the allegorical and historic trappings in which he swathed his sitters' identity, also testify to his distance from Hume's social virtues, and attempt to develop a public function of art of a Shaftesburian kind. This position is obviously at odds with Ramsay's. It is worth comparing here the way in which Reynolds promulgated his theories on art: firstly through a discourse delivered to a select audience, learned in its tone and range of references, and then through print, where again tone and references ensured a select audience. The contrast with Ramsay's theory could not

<sup>135</sup> Barrell (1986), p.58.

<sup>136</sup> Barrell (1986), p.58.

<sup>137</sup> Stephen Copley, 'The Fine arts in Eighteenth-Century Polite Culture' in John Barrell (ed.) *Painting and the Politics of Culture. New Essays on British art 1700-1850*, Oxford, 1992, pp.13-37. pp.14-15.

<sup>138</sup> Wind, pp.1-52. Reynolds's portrait of Beattie is described on p.29, in which three demonic figures, Voltaire, Gibbon and Hume are thrust into an abyss by Truth, who stands as a winged genius behind Beattie. *The Triumph of Truth* (exh. RA 1774, oil on canvas, 122 x 155cm, University of Aberdeen).

be more marked, for Ramsay, like Hume, was keen to address as broad an audience as possible, and his *Dialogue* provides an accessible and socially formed expression of his ideas.<sup>139</sup> The contrasts between the two painters are therefore marked: for while Reynolds continuously iterated public virtues in his portraiture throughout his career, Ramsay's stylistic and technical shifts of the 1750s coincided with the work of Hume, Kames and Smith in advocating the primacy of the social virtues. And his 1753-54 portraits of Edinburgh society are very early indicators of the transgression of the perceived boundaries between public and private, and of concern with social over public virtue.<sup>140</sup> Men dressed in their robes of office were portrayed in their public role, but nothing other than their dress suggested to the viewer this potential virtue. Most were painted on a standard half length canvas of 30 x 25 inches, rather than a potentially more imposing three-quarter or full length one.

Ramsay painted *John Maule of Inverkeilor* in the robes of a Baron of the Exchequer (Fig. 54) a position he held between 1748 and 1776. He also produced two portraits of *Hew Dalrymple*, *Lord Drummole*, a half length in his public robes of a Lord of Session (Fig. 37), and the other a seated three-quarter length probably for the family home (Fig. 36).<sup>141</sup> Other formal portraits painted on this visit include *Alexander Boswell*, *Lord Auchinleck* (Fig. 55), the father of James Boswell, painted on the occasion of his appointment as a Lord of Session on 25 February 1754. *James Ker* (Fig. 56), goldsmith, burgess for Edinburgh, and the city's

<sup>139</sup> Although extant first editions of Ramsay's *Dialogue* are now extremely rare (see above), a letter from Hume to Ramsay in 1755 describes the work's favourable reception in Edinburgh that year, Smart (London, 1992), p. 139.

<sup>140</sup> The names and positions of Ramsay's 1754 sitters are taken from Smart (1999).

<sup>141</sup> The half length in which he was dressed in the robes of office was destined for his cousin's house of Newhailes, the three-quarter length probably for his family home. A copy of Ramsay's three-quarter length portrait (whereabouts unknown) was commissioned for St Cecilia's Hall in the Canongate, where a musical society of which Dalrymple was a prominent member met and performed. Smart (1999), pp. 101-2 states that Ramsay was paid '£25. 4' for the copy.

MP between 1747 and 1754, was painted in the fur lined blue robes of the Deacon of the Incorporation of Goldsmiths. *John Campbell, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Loudon* (Fig. 57) dressed in ermine lined peers robes, and *General Sir John St Clair* (Fig. 46) was in a military jacket. However, in none of these portraits is the sitter's public role or identity revealed by means other than their costume.

The artist has not sought to reveal in the paintings' iconography, form or style the sitter's achievements within the public good. The backgrounds are plain, and no books, letters, armies or swords distract attention from the head; their visages are approachable and flawed. *Alexander Boswell* (Fig. 55) and *Hew Dalrymple* (Fig. 37), dressed in their robes of office, are painted close to the picture plane apparently offering direct eye contact with the viewer, rather than staring into a distance perceptible only to them as they implicitly think that required of public men. Further, both sitters engage with the viewer as an equal, not requiring them to look up to them, and catch lights further draw the viewer to the eyes provoking a sense of intimacy between sitter and viewer. The intimate scale of the paintings is also unconventional, neither full-length nor seated full length scale are employed to impress the viewer and empower the sitter. Significantly when Ramsay painted Dalrymple in private dress the portrait was a much more imposing three-quarter length. The portraits of *John Maule* (Fig. 54) and *James Ker* (Fig. 56) are similarly discreet about the sitter's public office. Ramsay thus rejects the boundaries between public and private, in a manner parallel to that of the Scottish moral sense school.

We can gauge the significance of this type of portraiture if we examine what Reynolds was producing around this date. Reynolds's *Commodore Augustus Keppel* of c1753-4 (Fig. 58), looked to Ramsay's *Norman, 22<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Macleod* of 1747 (Fig. 5) for its pattern. Ramsay's portrait was painted in the grand baroque style he was soon to



abandon, but Reynolds develops a forceful portrayal of a man of action, striding across the beach, hand on sword hilt, directing and controlling against the background of violent nature. His head is turned away from the viewer, engaged with more important matters.<sup>142</sup> Equally Reynolds's *Captain Robert Orme* is shown in the splendor of full length with his horse, active in his role as messenger.<sup>143</sup> While innovative in various ways, these portraits still work within the traditions and conventions of heroic male portraiture. They contrast with Ramsay's closely observed and personal portraits, in which intimacy breaks down the barrier between public and private.<sup>144</sup>

Ramsay's portraits bear an expression of calmness and disinterestedness that seeks to evince a sense of self composure, and yet they also invite in the spectator an active, sympathetic looking; a preponderance to become engaged with the sitter.<sup>145</sup> Such expressions point to the virtuous sensibility promoted by the Scottish moral sense school. This was but one of the techniques employed by the painter to demonstrate the sitter's virtues, as can be demonstrated by inquiring further into Ramsay's Edinburgh portraits. The half-length portraits were painted mainly on a standard canvases of 30 x 25in (76.2 x

<sup>142</sup> For the comparison between these portraits see Ellis Waterhouse, 'Portraiture from Kneller to Lawrence', *The Listener*, 11 May 1950, Solkin (1986), Penny, pp.181-2 and Smart (London 1992), pp.81-3.

<sup>143</sup> *Captain Robert Orme* (1756 oil on canvas, 240 x 147cm, National Gallery, London).

<sup>144</sup> It should be acknowledged that Reynolds, too, could produce far simpler portraits of public men, however, their position was of significance to the content of the portrait.

<sup>145</sup> The portraits Ramsay and other Scottish artists painted in the mid and late eighteenth century have been described as demonstrating a 'Scottish stoic' character, a label apparently certifying them as adhering to a popular conception of the Scots character. While this interpretation is in part historically justifiable, for stoicism had been, and remained an important discourse in eighteenth-century Scotland in particular through the language of the moderate clergy, the language of sociability and sensibility had largely superseded it in importance. Further, we might imagine that we recognise the self-composure that was the key for stoics' ethical behaviour in these portraits, particularly in their stillness, or inactivity. However, the characteristic virtuous expression of stoicism, self control, does bear strong relation to the virtuous expression of sensibility. Francis Hutcheson, described the highest virtue as calm disinterested benevolence, and is thought to have borrowed this 'law of feeling' from the stoics (see Susan M. Purviance, 'Intersubjectivity and Sociable Relations in the Philosophy of Francis Hutcheson' in John Dwyer and Richard B. Sher (eds.) *Sociability and Society in Eighteenth Century Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1993, p.35). The external expression of calmness and disinterestedness must surely bear some strong correspondence with self composure, and yet these portraits

63.5cm), the few larger portraits vary in scale – the three-quarter length portrait of *Hew Dalrymple* is 50 x 39in (127 x 101cm), *James Adam* 36 x 27in (91.4 x 68.6cm,) and *Mary Adam* 37 x 28in (94 x 71 cm) the latter two approximately Kit-cat size. The sitters are painted close to the picture plane and almost every sitter offers a direct and equal gaze. This, as has already been observed, invites a direct engagement between the sitter and spectator of the portrait, and one such as places them on an equal level, and within an intimate, and arguably, sociable and conversational relationship. This interaction is, additionally, evidence of their common virtue.

Conversation was not only important in polite and moral society, but it also played a central role in the theory of moral sense. Essentially the moral sense school, led by Hutcheson and developed by Hume and Smith, founded morals and aesthetic judgement on feeling rather than reason, and this feeling was perceived through moral sense.<sup>146</sup> Its basis lay in the belief that humanity was naturally benevolent and social, and took pleasure from conversation, and from the harmony of shared judgements and ideals. Hutcheson argued that it was essential that our judgements accorded with those of others, and that communication was essential in the establishment of this accord or harmony.<sup>147</sup> Through the sharing of individual moral experiences and judgements, a social standard of moral virtue could be established; it was conversation that enabled moral virtue to be refined and

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invite in the spectator an active, sympathetic looking, a preponderance to become engaged with the sitter, that points to their articulating the new rather than the old philosophies.

<sup>146</sup> V. M. Hope *Virtue by Consensus The Moral Philosophy of Hutcheson, Hume and Adam Smith*, Oxford, 1989, pp.23-25. The belief that man naturally has reason to pursue public good, rooted in Greek classical naturalism, was taken up by Hobbes, Locke and Shaftesbury. Shaftesbury's interpretation that man instinctively desires public good and is directly pleased in its pursuit directly influenced Hutcheson, Hume carried the explanation further with his theory of sympathy, see Hope, pp.13-14.

<sup>147</sup> Purviance, p.24.

harmonized to form a moral and virtuous society.<sup>148</sup> In *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* Hume argued 'The intercourse of sentiments, therefore, in society and conversation, makes us form some general unalterable standard, by which we may approve or disapprove of characters and manners.'<sup>149</sup> Smith's extensive and important development of these ideas is found in his *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*.

Conversation, central to the cultivation of a moral society and the virtue of the individual, was innate to the sociable and virtuous person, creating moral and polite links between people. Its expression in portraiture does something equivalent, showing the sitter as integrated into a society characterized by its shared morality and sense of virtue. As we have seen, Ramsay communicates a sense of intimacy through the detailed presentation of the minutiae of the sitter's face. We perceive distinguishing, not generalized, features such as would render the face both physically more distant, and also less recognizable as a particular individual. Witness the double chins, closely observed lower lids and mouth of *Hew Dalrymple* (Fig. 37) in his robes of office, or the smiling closed mouth of the Lord of Session *Alexander Boswell* (Fig. 55), or the heavy lids and down turn in the upper mouth of *James Ker* (Fig. 56) dressed in his official capacity as a deacon.<sup>150</sup>

In Ramsay's first portrait of *David Hume* (Fig. 40) this sense of intimacy attains a great intensity. Great subtleties are observed in the details of the face, and the areas of light and shade which mould it demonstrate Ramsay's close observation of the fall of light, as for example in the thin fall of shadow under the edge of the turban. Details are very finely drawn, eyebrows and lashes are individually painted and infinite attention has been paid to

<sup>148</sup> Purviance, p.25-26. Sympathy and sensibility were also of course significant here. For sensibility see John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability*, Oxford, 1988; Janet Todd, *Sensibility*, London & New York, 1986 and G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility*, London & Chicago 1992.

<sup>149</sup> Hume, *Enquiries*, p.229.

<sup>150</sup> His blue jacket and black fur are probably those of a deacon of the Incorporation of Goldsmiths.

every detail of the eyes' colouring. Together with the refined tonality and shading of eye lids and the presence of catch-lights in the eyes, these details serve to draw the viewer in, despite the sitter being turned slightly away. The pink tonality of his lips and the distinctive shape of his mouth are equally carefully observed. These details are such that the portrait rewards a close inspection suggestive of a close engagement with the sitter. Minute inspection of the painting reinforces the quality of the refinements of colouring and drawing. It would be naïve to attribute this to Hume's close personal relationship with Ramsay, although this will have helped the artist's sympathetic engagement with his sitter.

On the other hand, the portraits of *Lady Walpole Wemyss* (Fig. 50) and *Lady Helen Wemyss* (Fig. 51) also 1754, do repay viewing from a distance. For example, with *Lady Helen Wemyss* the left hand side of her face which is in shadow is undefined, and in both portraits the brush strokes are looser and less precise than those in the Hume portrait. However, despite this formal difference emphasized by the Wemyss sisters exhibiting greater psychological distance in the turn of their heads and position of their bodies, there remains a concern with detail in the lighting, dress and faces of these ladies. They are not swept over with a broad stroke that serves only to define them as beauties and marriage partners. Beneath their finery they are women of singularity, a point emphasized by both their differently coloured costumes and very different poses. These portraits have often been regarded as epitomizing Ramsay's affiliation to the French style, and in the French fashions worn by the ladies and the application of paint such affinities are pronounced. However, in Nattier's portraits of fashionable young ladies, regular facial features serve to produce an ideal of softly painted beauty. In contrast Ramsay, through distinct and differing poses and the portrayal of strong and distinct facial features, has painted the Wemyss sisters to suggest a strong sense of their own identity. Through the close

observation of detail Ramsay exposes not only the significance of the individual sitter, but also their close relationship with the viewer.

The portrayal of social intimacy is also conveyed, as we have noticed, through the closeness of the sitter to the picture plane. A technique long established in private portraiture, Ramsay uses it conventionally in his portraits of *William Hog* (Fig. 52) and *John Campbell of Achalater*. However, it is an intimacy less associated with portraits of men painted fulfilling public roles, for example the portrait of the eminent judge *Hew Dalrymple* (Fig. 37) or *Alexander Boswell* (Fig. 55). Again, the demarcation between public and private has been occluded, a point that can be reinforced by comparing this half-length portrait of Dalrymple with Ramsay's similarly dated three-quarter length portrait of the same subject (Fig. 36), in which the sitter is placed at a little distance from the picture plane.

Intimacy is also implied by the direct contact between the eyes of the sitter and those of the spectator, a powerful illusion for a two-dimensional image. The disturbance in public and private boundaries in the official portraits painted has already been discussed, but reinforces the extent to which Ramsay follows Hume. Conventions of public portraiture demanded that the public man was busy, too preoccupied with important matters to look at the viewer, so, in effect, he was caught in the act of carrying out his public duty. In Ramsay's portraits of those fulfilling these public roles the sitter engages the viewer with a direct and equal gaze, thus breaking with convention. In effect the psychological distance between viewer and sitter has been decreased and a form of social intimacy established.

The equality of this eye contact is important, as it too demonstrates Ramsay ignoring portrait convention, for rather than look down (or, in the case of women, up) at the viewer, the sitters, both in official and private portraits, and male and female, no matter <sup>what</sup> their social position, look out directly and equally at the spectator. A direct engagement implying

parity within an intimate, sociable and conversational relationship. When psychological distance is removed and intimacy replaces it through direct and equal interaction, virtues and status of a different, and arguably social, kind are inferred.

This is a pictorial counterpart to that aesthetic and moral position that attributed taste and virtue to the observer rather than observed. The open countenance and direct and equal eye contact of Ramsay's sitters implied an observer. This can, of course, be found elsewhere. For example, Reynolds's 1753 portrait of *Captain the Honourable John Hamilton* a half-length portrait in an oval, displays remarkable formal similarities to Ramsay, although this might have been because Reynolds wished to display the full extent of his power.<sup>151</sup> Gainsborough, upon whom Ramsay had a real effect, also painted portraits of sensibility, as with *Henry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Buccleuch*.<sup>152</sup>

While the connections between the theories of the moral sense school and Ramsay's move to a second style of portraiture are therefore important to understanding why his art should have undergone such an important change, more prosaic stimuli may also have encouraged it. The question of setting, vital to the scale of pictures, and central in establishing those who might have viewed them, is one of the most important considerations in discussions of the sale and display of eighteenth-century pictures. For as the market for paintings and prints broadened, so the settings in which they were to be displayed also became more various, and these settings could affect the conception of paintings.<sup>153</sup> However, it will be demonstrated that the settings of Ramsay's portraits in Scotland were comparable to those found in England and too international to have had a particular and

<sup>151</sup> *Captain the Honourable John Hamilton* (oil on canvas, 30 x 25in (76 x 63cm), private collection), illustrated plate 8b of Ellis K. Waterhouse, *Reynolds*, 1941.

<sup>152</sup> For Gainsborough and sensibility see Rosenthal (1999) pp.219-242.

<sup>153</sup> For the display of portraits in the eighteenth century see Pointon (1993), *passim*.

significant impact on Ramsay's artistic development. The influence of the cultural and social milieux were therefore of even greater import in influencing his change in style.

Ramsay's portraits of this period were painted most often for the houses of his sitters or their commissioners. The old Town of Edinburgh contained some substantial dwellings. Ramsay's patrons were most likely to reside in the Canongate, or to live in villas on the outskirts of the city at only a few miles distant.<sup>154</sup> Even those who possibly lived on the High Street may have lived in the more expensive, and probably therefore larger apartments. Henry Grey Graham describes the range of rents within the same close or stair as varying from the cellars and garrets at twelve Scots pounds (18s) to the best chambers at three hundred Scots pounds (£20), although the most common rent for a gentleman in the first half of the century was between £8 and £10 per year.<sup>155</sup> A directory detailing the inhabitants of Edinburgh in 1752, locates securely only one of Ramsay's sitters during this visit to Edinburgh as resident in the old town - James Ker, the goldsmith is recorded in Allan's Close on the north side of the High Street at the Cross.<sup>156</sup>

The houses of the Canongate were situated strategically close to the palace; the Edinburgh homes of the Duke of Queensberry, Lord Milton, and in the 1760s Sir John Whitefoord of Ballochmyle, lined the road from Holyrood to the High Street. The residents of this burgh covered the broad spectrum of Scotland's elite, from dukes and earls - such as Bredalbane, Wemyss and Balcarres; to lords - including Haddo and Nairn; to Lords of Session including Hailes and Kames; and encompassed baronets, Commanders in Chief,

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<sup>154</sup> There were a considerable number of villas and grand houses within close proximity to Edinburgh, including Amisfield House, Hopetoun House and Penicuik House.

<sup>155</sup> Graham, p.85.

<sup>156</sup> J. Gilhooly, *A Directory of Edinburgh in 1752*, Edinburgh, 1988.

Adam Smith, Dugald Stewart and Dr Gregory.<sup>157</sup> The spaciousness of the houses of the aristocracy is exemplified by No. 64 Canongate, Queensberry House (Fig. 59), while their splendour and grandeur is illustrated by the surviving grisaille decoration of Moray House. The re-decoration, by William de la Cour, of the dining room in Lord Milton's house at 90 Canongate, involved 35 yards of 'finest green plain painting', 158 yards of 'best flake white', and the enriching of 1660 feet of moulding in gold, which indicates the scale of the most important room in the house.<sup>158</sup>

Aside from these grand villas, smaller self contained apartments of three and four flats existed in for example New Street, which were tenanted by men such as those listed above. Susannah, Countess of Eglinton and David Hume for example lived in flats in Jack's Land.<sup>159</sup> The scale and refinement of these apartments can be observed in the reconstruction of a public room from Riddle's Court (near the head of the High Street), including the decorative landscape panels the Norie family painted in the 1740s, at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh.<sup>160</sup> Therefore the intimacy and delicacy that are unique to Ramsay's paintings were unlikely to have been dictated by confined settings, such as would have favoured these qualities. Here it is useful to consider the patronage and

<sup>157</sup> A list of the inhabitants of the Canongate is given in R. Chambers (1996), p.296. For a history of the Canongate see John Mackay, *History of the Burgh of Canongate*, Edinburgh, 1879.

<sup>158</sup> NMRS, file on 90 Canongate, Milton House, transcript of a letter from William de la Cour to Lord Milton, 15 October 1758, sent to John Adam. It describes the decision to enrich the cornices, friezes and architraves to 'give a true harmony to the whole', which Lord Milton and Mr Ramsay had approved. The grand total was £85-9-5. A plan of this house is contained in William Adam, *Vitruvius Scoticus*, facsimile reproduction, Edinburgh, 1980, plate 45.

<sup>159</sup> Mackay, pp.122 & 129.

<sup>160</sup> Although only the decorative panels are original, the reconstruction was based on evidence from the room before its demolition through photographs and measured drawings to ensure accuracy of scale. I am grateful to Hugh Cheape of the National Museum of Scotland for providing information on the reconstruction of this room. The Nories were an important family of decorative landscape painters whose firm was prominent in Edinburgh throughout the eighteenth century and under whom a number of landscape painters, including Jacob Moore and Alexander Runciman, trained, see Irwin, pp.126-8.



display of Ramsay's paintings by the Dalrymples, at Newhailes.<sup>161</sup> The Dalrymple family were Scottish patrons of Ramsay, and through their patronage we can analyse Ramsay's personal and professional relationships with one of Scotland's leading legal dynasties across a number of generations and family branches.<sup>162</sup> Further, to reconstruct the hanging at Newhailes tells us a great deal about how portraits were hung in the eighteenth century.<sup>163</sup>

Newhailes, or Whitehill, as it was originally called, was built as the personal residence of the architect James Smith in 1686. Based upon a seven bay plan, along classical lines, it was intended as a villa with views over the sea. It was bought by Sir David Dalrymple (c1665-1721) in 1709, and around 1720, extended by the addition of a large library wing. Sir David's son, James (1692-1751) added a second wing to balance this, which included a large dining room, whose shell was complete by 1733.<sup>164</sup> The patronage of artists by this eminent family, and the decoration of their villa retreat, demonstrate both attitudes and resources typical to one of the most important strata of Ramsay's Edinburgh patronage, the judiciary.<sup>165</sup>

The patronage and friendship Ramsay enjoyed from this important Scottish legal dynasty, is witnessed by both the records and correspondence of the family, and in the

<sup>161</sup> Newhailes is currently being restored by the National Trust for Scotland. I am grateful to Charles Strang of the Trust for providing me with a copy of a report on Newhailes House and estate, commissioned by them from Dr W. B. McQueen.

<sup>162</sup> Important familial ties can be found between Ramsay's patrons. Smart (London, 1992), p.76, has observed connections between the Dalrymples and a number of Ramsay's other sitters in the 1740s - Sir James Dalrymple, Sir James Grant of Grant, his son Sir Ludovic Grant and Sir John Baird of Newbyth. Sir John Baird's wife was Janet Dalrymple, the sister of Sir James Dalrymple and Sir Ludovic Grant's second wife was the daughter of yet another sitter in 1739, the Earl of Findlater and Seafield.

<sup>163</sup> Research into eighteenth-century hanging has been carried out by Stephen Deuchar, *Sporting Art in Eighteenth-Century England*, New Haven & London, 1988, pp.86-91; Pointon (1993) and Charles Saumarez-Smith, *Eighteenth-Century Decoration. Design and the Domestic Interior in England*, London, 1993.

<sup>164</sup> This history of Newhailes is taken mainly from a number of articles in *Country Life*. Paul Duncan, 'Newhailes, East Lothian', 29 January, 1987, pp.86-89; Paul Duncan, 'Newhailes Part II', 5 February 1987, pp.58-61; John Cornforth, 'Newhailes, East Lothian I', 21 November, 1996, pp.46-57; John Cornforth, 'Newhailes, East Lothian', 28 November, 1996, pp.42-47, all *Country Life*. The National Trust for Scotland report on Newhailes was also consulted.

paintings that still hang at Newhailes. Ramsay's professional relationship with the Dalrymple family dates from 1739 when Sir James sat for his portrait (Fig. 60). References to portraits commissioned from Ramsay in accounts are signalled not only by Ramsay's, but also the sitter's name. For example in June 1754 when Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes was 3<sup>rd</sup> Bt., the following entry was recorded - 'To Mr Ramsay the Painter, being the first moiety for Lord Drummore's picture.' On 20 November 1766 'To Mr Ramsay - payment for A's picture & mine' probably refers to portraits of *Sir David Dalrymple* and his wife *Anne Broun, Lady Hailes*.<sup>166</sup> This entry is of particular interest as it provides a firm date for these portraits, until now adjudged to be c1766-7 on stylistic grounds.<sup>167</sup> In addition Ramsay was possibly also acting as an agent, as Mr Ramsay was paid £13: 2:6 in 1769 'for a picture.'<sup>168</sup>

Lord Hailes's pocket books were not restricted to recording business appointments, but extended to social meetings, and even to recording romantic sentiments, and they suggest that Ramsay's relationship with the Dalrymples was also personal. That for 1751 records that in September Ramsay visited Newhailes. It is likely that this visit was not purely professional as Dalrymple was enjoying a period of quiet contemplation while the family were away.<sup>169</sup> A later one records that on Monday 20 May 1754 he paid Mr Ramsay's servant one shilling, suggesting a meeting or some form of correspondence between the artist and lawyer, further, on that Wednesday it recorded that Dalrymple had appointments with Allan Ramsay, Lords Hopeton and Findlater. These meetings and

<sup>165</sup> Stella Tillyard, *Aristocrats*, London, 1995, pp.202-5 offers a description of the decoration and acquisition of prints and portraits at Castletown by Lady Louisa Connolly, another of Ramsay's sitters.

<sup>166</sup> *Sir David Dalrymple* (oil on canvas, 30 x 25in (76.2 x 63.5cm), NTS, Newhailes), *Anne Broun, Lady Hailes*. (oil on canvas, 30 x 25in. (76.2 x 63.5cm), The Trustees of the late Sir Mark Dalrymple, Bt.)

<sup>167</sup> Smart (1999), p.128. Hailes was made a Lord of Session in 1766.

<sup>168</sup> NLS. MS 25820, ff.25 & 35r. Ramsay is not known to have painted any member of the Dalrymple family at this date.

correspondence are undoubtedly related to the foundation and inaugural meeting of the Select Society which took place that day, 22 May 1754. This pocket book also records Dalrymple's attendance at meetings of the society beginning on Wednesday 26 June 1754.<sup>170</sup>

Although there are few surviving bills or inventories, the eighteenth-century decorative lay-out of the house remains remarkably intact. In particular the most important room of the house, the dining room, retains the single layer of fashionable dove green paint that the decorative painter James Norie applied, and which was specified in a surviving bill.<sup>171</sup> The dining room also retains the real gilded shells and carved frames with a Greek key design, that incorporate the portraits in this room with its furniture and other carvings to form a coherent decorative scheme. The shell motif is repeated throughout the house and provides a decorative theme that links the house to its coastal setting and its idea of retreat and contemplation exemplified by the great library.<sup>172</sup> As John Cornforth has pointed out, the building of a library on this scale and position is without precedent in Scotland, the earliest example in England being the wing built by James Gibbs at Wimpole, Cambridge.<sup>173</sup>

The dining room was the most important room in the Scottish house, with its appearance as an important feature predating that in England.<sup>174</sup> Stana Nenadic has stressed

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<sup>169</sup> NLS. MS 25418, ff.8 & 9.

<sup>170</sup> NLS. MS 25419, ff.25, 26, 30, 32, 34, 51-55.

<sup>171</sup> Duncan (29 January), pp.86-89, p.88 and Cornforth (28 November), pp.42-47, p.45. In addition to simple colouring Norie also painted decorative schemes at Newhailes, accounts for the period 1731-1734 include a bill for 10 shillings for painting three landscapes and several groups of festoons in September 1734, NLS. MS. 25818, ff.72-73.

<sup>172</sup> For the idea of the villa see most recently Dana Arnold (ed.) *The Georgian Villa*, Stroud, 1996. The Edinburgh villa is considered in this book by Ian Gow 'The Edinburgh Villa Revisited: Function not Form', pp.144-154. Gow points out that the crowded nature and poor sanitation made Edinburgh intolerable even in a Scottish summer, and that from an early period the nobility and wealthier citizens preferred self-contained houses set in parks near the city. He argues that even the Canongate can be regarded as an early example of this.

<sup>173</sup> Cornforth (21 November), p.49.

<sup>174</sup> Cornforth (28 November), pp.42-47.

its significance as a site for the display of paintings, in particular family portraits.<sup>175</sup> In its well preserved, eighteenth-century state, the dining room at Newhailes provides strong evidence of the type of hanging that would have been fashionable in the Edinburgh villas of Ramsay's patrons. The panels and highly decorative frames and surrounds of the portraits are typically modish. A design for a dining room by Isaac Ware (Fig. 61), published as plate 68 in his *Complete Body of Architecture* of 1756, shows a design very similar to that at Newhailes. Saumarez-Smith has argued that though by this date this was a classic design, if slightly old fashioned, twenty years earlier it would undoubtedly have been the latest thing.<sup>176</sup> Pictures, arranged symmetrically are set into paneling, above the chimney piece, doors and either side of the chimney. On another three sides of the room a mixture of different sized panels indicate the position for other paintings, whilst on the fourth wall, that opposite the chimney, are windows. The arrangement in Newhailes (Fig. 62) is identical on the chimney piece wall, although the other two sides do vary, and where windows face the chimney in Ware's design, glass reflects the portraits at Newhailes.

The colouring and decorative elements found in the Newhailes dining room were up-to-the-minute, and a portrait by Joseph Francis Nollekens of *A Family in a Palladian Interior* of 1740 (Fig. 63) displays a comparable interior decoration with regards to colouring and gilding. The purchases listed in the documents, letters and accounts cited above, are still found in the house. Above a chimney piece by Henry Cheere, on walls painted green by Norie, hangs Sir John Medina's portrait of *Viscount Stair* who is flanked by the *1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Stair* by Medina, purchased in 1739 through the artist's grandson.<sup>177</sup> On

<sup>175</sup> Stana Nenadic 'Middle Rank Consumers and Domestic Culture in Edinburgh and Glasgow 1720-1840', *Past and Present*, vol.145, 1994, pp.122-56.

<sup>176</sup> Saumarez-Smith, p.137.

<sup>177</sup> NLS. MS 25281 ff.53 & 54, a letter from Henry Cheere, Westminster to James Newhailes, Bart, Newhailes near Edinburgh, expressed regret that he could not alter the chimney piece with lions head and skin as

the other side of the chimney hangs Ramsay's portrait of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Stair, of 1745, for which a payment of £17:2:0 was made to Ramsay in London, in August of that year.<sup>178</sup>

This tripartite group, of the first three generations of the ennobled Dalrymple family, were undoubtedly purchased and commissioned for dynastic purposes, as their original hanging positions testify. Facing each other across the room are portraits of *Sir James Dalrymple* (Fig. 60) who built the dining wing extension, and his wife *Christian Dalrymple* by Ramsay.<sup>179</sup> The integrated hanging of this room articulates the close family relationship between the Dalrymples of Newhailes and their more eminent cousins the Earls of Stair.<sup>180</sup>

The library, a room of utmost importance in this house, begun by Sir David Dalrymple, has as its central pictorial focus a portrait by Sir John Medina (1659-1710) of the first Sir David (c1665-1721), and his son James (1692-1751). While the Chinese Room contained Ramsay's full length portrait of *Agnes Murray-Knynmund Dalrymple* (1731-78) the niece of Sir James of 1739, Ramsay's 1749 portrait of Sir David's daughter Janet hangs as a double portrait with that of her husband, General James St Clair by Jean-Marc Nattier (Fig. 38).<sup>181</sup> This is currently in the Green Bedroom, its unusual double width frame inset into an alcove, framed by classical columns and straight pediment. While there is no evidence to point to this being its original position, given the preservation of hangs in other parts of the house, it is a real possibility. Other Ramsay portraits in the house include those

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Dalrymple has requested, and acknowledging a payment of £80, this is the fireplace situated in the dining room. Cornforth, (28 November), p.42, notes that Cheere supplied three or four of the principal chimney pieces in the house. *Viscount Stair* (oil on canvas, NTS, Newhailes), *1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Stair* (oil on canvas, NTS, Newhailes).

<sup>178</sup> The portrait of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl (oil on canvas, 50 x 40in (127 x 101.6cm), NTS, Newhailes) is a version of another in another private collection, which Ingamells (1999) dates to c1744. NLS. MS 25281, f.109.

<sup>179</sup> *Christian Dalrymple* (1740, oil on canvas, 29½ x 25in (74.9 x 63.9cm), NTS, Newhailes).

<sup>180</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> Earl was Sir James' uncle, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl his first cousin.

<sup>181</sup> *Agnes Murray-Knynmund Dalrymple* (oil on canvas, 56 x 40in (142.2 x 101.6cm), NTS, Newhailes).

previously discussed, *Anne Broun of Coalston*, (1766) wife of Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, and *Hew Dalrymple* (Fig. 37) in his robes of office, cousin of Sir James.

The pattern of purchasing and commissioning of portraits c1739-40 indicates an intention of creating a coherent programme, coincident with the extension of the house, and the establishment of a decorative scheme binding its different parts together. This scheme of physical expansion, re-decoration and the collecting of portraits established Newhailes as a family seat as well as retreat from professional life in Edinburgh.

Although most of the portraits at Newhailes date from the period of Ramsay's first style, the family's patronage and friendship with the artist continued into the 1760s, and one portrait was commissioned for Newhailes in 1754, the half length portrait of *Hew Dalrymple* in his robes of office (Fig. 37).<sup>182</sup> Although its intended location is obscure (it currently hangs over a door) it was commissioned for Newhailes, as two payments for it are recorded in the tradesmen's accounts of 1754, each for £6:6:0 which correlates with the price of 12 guineas Ramsay was charging at this date.<sup>183</sup> Given the scale and design of this villa, it would seem that the intimacy of the portrait was not predicated by the room design, for Newhailes was a fashionable villa, in which the scale and size of the principal rooms of library and dining room, signal their developing importance. The conclusion invited, that the typical villa surroundings enjoyed by many of Ramsay's Edinburgh patrons were not sufficiently different from their English counterparts to have initiated, or even effected, Ramsay's change in style, is reinforced by considering the settings for a number of his other portraits of this time.

<sup>182</sup> While a formal subject, it has already been discussed how this portrait, in its direct engagement with the viewer and scale, does not impose a notion of superiority or grandeur on the spectator.

<sup>183</sup> Ramsay's prices are taken from Smart (1999), p.419. In 1754 Ramsay was charging 12 guineas for a half length and 24 guineas for a three-quarter length copy.

The three-quarter length of *Hew Dalrymple, Lord Drummore* (Fig. 36) is contemporary with the half-length that hangs at Newhailes. Although there are no documents surrounding this portrait commission, and none of the surviving documents at Newhailes refer to this portrait, it may have been painted for the sitter's villa, Drummore, near Musselburgh a few miles from Edinburgh.<sup>184</sup> In pose and dress this portrait brings to mind Ramsay's earlier portrait of Drummore's uncle, *James Dalrymple* (Fig. 60), a connection more significant to those familiar with the dining room setting of this latter portrait at Newhailes. These portraits share a similarly restrained background and pose - one arm resting on a table and the other on the right leg. However, while Sir James adopts a somewhat superior expression with head raised, and is accompanied by papers to demonstrate intellectual activity, his nephew's countenance is open and friendly, engaging directly with the viewer, unoccupied by any papers. The harder outlines of Ramsay's earlier style also distinguish this earlier portrait, from the softer more direct portrayal of the younger lord. The bare, restrained and pared down columns of Drummore's portrait provide an echo of a pilaster that can be distinguished in the earlier portrait, and are perfectly conventional. Most significant to this discussion however, is the table upon which Drummore leans. While the use of blocks of colour, and restricted tonal range direct attention to the sitter's face and hands, we nonetheless notice the detailed portrayal of carved floral swags, and most significantly a Greek key design. This design also features in the frames of the portraits in this room, and significantly in the sideboard beneath Ramsay's portrait of Sir James Dalrymple to which in many ways the Drummore portrait responds. Ramsay drew out strong connections between his sitters through familial likeness, while

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<sup>184</sup> Drummore has been destroyed and no plans or drawings survive. The provenance for this portrait confirms that this was indeed a family picture, by descent in the Dalrymple-Horn-Elphinstone family at Mansion House.

pointing up the relevance of the house itself and perhaps referring even to the legal dynasty recreated in the dining room portraits. In this way the setting of the portrait of Sir James Dalrymple impacted directly on the portrait of his nephew, Sir Hew.

*Hew Dalrymple* (Fig. 36) is one of the larger works Ramsay painted in 1754. Other three-quarter lengths included *James Adam* (Fig. 44) (36 x 27) and his mother *Mrs Mary Adam* (Fig. 45) (37 x 28). At this time they were both living in the Canongate, where, as we saw, the rooms were on a generous scale, and these portraits may have been painted for there or, perhaps, for the family home of Blair Adam.<sup>185</sup>

But what of the majority of portraits painted on half length canvases? For what kind of surroundings were they destined? The portraits of *Lady Walpole Wemyss* (Fig. 50) and *Lady Helen Wemyss* (Fig. 51) are recorded as being at Amisfield House in 1771.<sup>186</sup> The home of the Earls of Wemyss and March prior to the 1780s, Amisfield, was a Palladian mansion designed by Isaac Ware, and included in his *A Complete Body of Architecture*. An account of 1792 described a large collection of paintings hung in the gallery, and the apartments as 'large, elegant, and numerous.'<sup>187</sup>

It was an architecture of grandeur and physical statement, and although the portraits demonstrate the delicacy of technique that characterized Ramsay's portraits, it is difficult to equate this style with the scale of their setting. However, these portraits, unlike that of *David Hume* (Fig. 40), benefit from being viewed from a certain distance, the brush strokes are looser and broader. In the portrait of *Lady Helen Wemyss* (Fig. 51), the sitter looks

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Logie, Elphinstone, Smart (1999), p. 102.

<sup>185</sup> It is probable that the portrait of Mary Adam was intended to be hung at Blair Adam as, according to Smart (1999), p. 70, a copy of the portrait still in the family home is hung as a pendant to an earlier portrait of William Adam, her husband.

<sup>186</sup> 'Catalogue of Family portraits at Amisfield, 1771'. I am grateful to Lady Wemyss for drawing my attention to this document, and supplying a copy of it.



down to her right and does not engage with the viewer; hers is a very demure pose. The left side of the face is left undefined by light and shade and her right ear is not closely drawn in. The same indistinctness, at close range, can also be found in the portrait of her sister, *Lady Walpole Wemyss* (Fig. 50), who, however, looks directly out of the picture. This portrait, and that of her sister was painted to be viewed from below, and at a distance of only a few feet. It would therefore seem that Ramsay did take account of the situation in which the pictures were to be hung, although this does not seem to have been a defining influence in the creation of his delicate and intimate style.

Ramsay attained the most elevated status of an artist of his day, that of Principal Painter in Ordinary to the King; he was also vice-president of the Incorporated Society of Artists, and patronized by dukes and earls, with his royal portraits widely dispersed, thanks to his workshop. His reputation and attainments were therefore publicly lauded by both patrons and fellow artists. Although closely involved with the Society of Arts, and Vice-President of the Incorporated Society of Artists, Ramsay never exhibited there or at any other of the public exhibitions, including the Royal Academy, although a number of his works were on view to the public.<sup>188</sup> It was a point that contemporaries noted. In 1764 Walpole remarked that 'Ramsay has never sent a single picture into any of the exhibitions.'<sup>189</sup> Smart suggests that Ramsay may not have been in favour of public exhibitions, arguing persuasively that to have had his work hung close to the work of other

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<sup>187</sup> Rev. Dr George Barclay, *Archaeologica Scotia, or Translations of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, Vol.I, Edinburgh, 1792, p.46.

<sup>188</sup> Ramsay's 1747 portrait of Dr Richard Mead was painted for the Foundling Hospital which offered the opportunity for Ramsay and other artists to display their work within the public domain, however, such opportunities were rare in Britain. Although more restricted in its audience, the commissioning in 1749 by the Town Council of Glasgow of a full-length portrait of *Archibald Campbell, 3rd Duke of Argyll* (oil on canvas, Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow), did expose Ramsay's paintings to public scrutiny, likewise his later royal portraits.

<sup>189</sup> Whitley, pp.201-202.

artists of a different character would have detracted from the delicacy and discreetness of his unassertive paintings.<sup>190</sup> Certainly the development of the exhibition portrait, with its bold colouration and dramatic and bold style of representation, attests to the type of painting that was best suited to exhibition, and is clearly at odds with Ramsay's style.

However, although he did not exhibit, the arrival of the exhibition coincided only with his last decade as a portrait painter, and he belonged to a generation whose influence and reputation was not made in general through such a public domain. From his standing and important commissions it might be expected that his influence on the next generation of artists would be considerable. However, as Smart concludes, Ramsay's retirement from practice about a decade before his death, and his desire to be recognized as a man of letters, contributed to his artistic reputation suffering even during his own lifetime.<sup>191</sup>

He did, however, influence some. Thomas Gainsborough's technique, and familiarity with the *Dialogue*, were noted above. Reynolds described his rival as a natural painter, commenting that if he 'did not look at nature with a poet's eye, it must be acknowledged that he saw her with the eye of a painter; and gave a faithful, if not a poetical, representation of what he had before him', and that his abilities lay in a 'natural sagacity and a minute observation of particular nature.'<sup>192</sup> These qualities have obvious affinities with the work of Ramsay, and both artists were concerned that art should be mimetic, a point contemporary viewers noted in their observation of how strong or startling a likeness Gainsborough's portraits took.<sup>193</sup>

A common grounding in the tradition of empirical observation and modernity associated with St Martin's Lane, underlies the relationship between Ramsay and

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<sup>190</sup> Smart (London, 1992), p.222.

<sup>191</sup> Smart (London, 1992), p.277.

Gainsborough, while after the initial impact in the later 1750s, the latter began developing his art in response to lessons to be learned elsewhere.<sup>194</sup> Ramsay's influence on Gainsborough was through the aesthetics taught at St Martin's Lane, and promoted by the *Dialogue*, rather than a strong painterly influence. For although a delicate technique can be ascribed to both artists, they are easily distinguished from each other. Gainsborough consequently belongs to this alternative tradition, but in complex ways that cannot be simply explained by his being a follower of Ramsay.

Ramsay's effect on others was less fundamental. Reynolds responds, as the long-recognised debt of *Commodore Augustus Keppel* (Fig. 58) to Ramsay's *Norman, 22<sup>nd</sup> Chief of MacLeod* (Fig. 5) shows. However, in even those female portraits by Reynolds that are indebted in their delicate technique to Ramsay's second style, as with *Anne Countess of Albemarle* (Fig. 64) the sitter remains aloof and distant. Reynolds's later, 1778, picture of *The Rt. Hon. John Hely-Hutchinson* retains some of Ramsay's influence, not least in the full lighting of the face, that as Desmond Shawe-Taylor has pointed out, is similar to that of Ramsay's three-quarter length *Hew Dalrymple* (Fig. 36) in avoiding a distinctive light and dark side to the face.<sup>195</sup> Further, the delicate painting of lace also seems to recall Ramsay, and the sitter engages directly with the viewer, but in a way that Shawe-Taylor describes as 'disputatious'.<sup>196</sup> It is not the expression of conversational engagement, of listening to understand, to learn and improve society's virtuous behaviour, but rather an expression of the professional life of the sitter (provost of Trinity College Dublin, lawyer and statesman)

<sup>192</sup> Reynolds, Discourse XIV, and in particular p.253.

<sup>193</sup> This is discussed by Asfour and Williamson, (1998), p.405.

<sup>194</sup> Asfour and Williamson (1998) make connections between Gainsborough's painting and Hume's theories. Wind also made this connection.

<sup>195</sup> Joshua Reynolds, *The Rt. Hon. John Hely-Hutchinson* (National Gallery of Ireland).

<sup>196</sup> Shawe-Taylor, p.88.

who is dressed in formal robes, surrounded by letters and papers. In addition, a slight incline of the head attests to the sitters superiority.

Joseph Wright also took heed of Ramsay's delicate technique, especially in its application to female portraits, such as the *Hon. Mrs Boyle* (Fig. 65). A direct quotation of Ramsay's *Lady Susan Fox-Strangeways* is also found in the portrait of Mary Shuttleworth, part of a group portrait of *James Shuttleworth, his wife and daughter*.<sup>197</sup> Benedict Nicolson has argued that Ramsay's influence on Wright lay in the softness of tone, luminosity and composition, but Ramsay paints what the eye observes, Wright paints from knowledge of the subject.<sup>198</sup>

The grand manner required by the London exhibition, and the need to demonstrate art's public rather than social role, would have helped render Ramsay's style unsuitable during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, in particular for the portrayal of men. In England, even though elements of his technique and other areas of influence may be glimpsed in the details of individual portraits, these examples are disparate and too inconsistent to register as significant. However, in Scotland his influence appears to have been extremely important and long-lasting, in a direct continuation of his style, through the establishment of a tradition of imitative portrait painting after Ramsay stopped making such long or regular visits to the city, but before his retirement or death.

William Millar (fl.1751-1784) was both a copier of Ramsay's portraits and an imitator of his style. Little information or evidence about this artist survives, but he is first recorded in 1751 through a copy after Ramsay, and he also made a copy of Ramsay's second

<sup>197</sup> Allan Ramsay, *Lady Susan Fox-Strangeways* (1761, oil on canvas, 35½ x 27¼in (90.2 x 70.5cm), private collection) and Joseph Wright, *James Shuttleworth, his wife and daughter* (1764, oil on canvas, 56 x 72in (142.2 x 182.7cm), private collection). These comparisons are made by Benedict Nicolson in *Joseph Wright of Derby Painter of Light*, 2 vols, London, 1968, vol.1, p.31.

<sup>198</sup> Nicolson, vol. 1, p.31.

portrait of Hume soon after it was painted in 1766.<sup>199</sup> Millar also made copies after Gavin Hamilton, his *Sir William Hamilton of Bangour* (Fig. 66), in which the poet is enclosed in an oval with classical frieze below. Millar appears to have copied this as part of a pair, or possibly series, probably for a single patron as another painting by Millar in the same collection, *Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu* imitates the form and style of Hamilton's work very closely.<sup>200</sup> Millar was therefore a copyist and imitator, rather than a painter of invention. He not only painted copies of Ramsay's works but also painted portraits in his style, that in their intimacy and directness can be closely compared with those Ramsay executed in 1753-54.

A portrait of *Professor Adam Ferguson* (Fig. 67), signed and dated 1763, although diverging in pose from the forms employed in Ramsay's half lengths of the early 1750s, does clearly follow many of the other conventions Ramsay employed. Standing behind a chair, while resting his arm on it, Ferguson looks directly at the viewer with an unswerving and equal gaze. Further, there are no conventions of dress, appurtenances or setting to describe the man's profession as a philosopher. Millar is also attributed with the portraits of *Roger Hog of Newliston* (1715-89) (Fig. 68) and his wife *Rachel Hog* (Fig. 69). These portraits are particularly interesting for, if they are not by Millar, they further demonstrate Ramsay's continued importance to Edinburgh's middling sorts. On his visit to Edinburgh Ramsay had painted portraits of the Edinburgh banker *William Hog of Newliston* (Fig. 52) and his wife *Mrs Jean Hog* (Fig. 53), the direct relatives of Millar's pair. Both sets of

<sup>199</sup> The closeness of Millar to Ramsay is observed by MacMillan (1990), p.109. Smart (London, 1992), p.5, also notes that Millar made many copies after Ramsay. Millar also made a copy of Ramsay's 1754 portrait of Hume, signed and dated 1758 (University of Edinburgh).

<sup>200</sup> *Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu* (1763, Earl of Stair, Oxenfoord Castle) Both pictures are in the collection of the Earl of Stair, Oxenfoord Castle. The artist's file at the Witt Library notes that both paintings were listed by Smellie in 1790 as at Cranstoun. This would seem to imply that they have been long regarded as a pair.

portraits are the standard half length size, with the sitters framed in ovals. Not only does Millar mimic Ramsay's painting style, but he also copies the pose and dress of the sitters. However, while Ramsay's sitters exhibit warmth and humanity, Millar's couple are staid, formal and flat.<sup>201</sup>

A continued demand for Ramsay-style portraits was also met by David Martin. Martin was Ramsay's assistant and pupil from probably about 1752, and was most probably studying under and assisting Ramsay during the latter's last long visit to Edinburgh.<sup>202</sup> Smart's summary of Martin's career is somewhat dismissive, but essentially accurate; that Martin entirely succumbed to Ramsay's style which he later modified with borrowings from Reynolds, before imitating Raeburn.<sup>203</sup> After accompanying Ramsay to Italy in 1754, he settled in London working in Ramsay's studio until the 1770s.<sup>204</sup> Martin's career relied on similar patterns of patronage to Ramsay's. He travelled frequently to Scotland, dividing his time between London and Edinburgh, particularly at the beginning of the 1780s.<sup>205</sup> He enjoyed the patronage of Edinburgh's middling sorts, including the Alexanders, a family of bankers and merchants and the diarist Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk.<sup>206</sup> He also enjoyed the patronage of one of the most important London based Scots, Lord Mansfield.<sup>207</sup>

<sup>201</sup> David Martin also painted similar portraits of Roger Hog and his wife in 1783.

<sup>202</sup> Alastair Smart, *The Life of Allan Ramsay*, London, 1952, p.54, records that Martin is first mentioned in Ramsay's banking account on 30 January 1752. The only comprehensive study of the life and art of David Martin is Lucy Dixon, 'David Martin (1737-1797) A Catalogue Raisonné of his Portraits in oils' unpublished M.Phil Thesis, University of St Andrews, October 1994. The information given here on Martin's career is taken from this work. However, I do not agree with Dixon on much of her analysis of the painter's work.

<sup>203</sup> Smart (1952), p121.

<sup>204</sup> Dixon, p.29. By the 1770s Ramsay's chief assistant was Philip Reinagle.

<sup>205</sup> Dixon, pp.10-12. Martin was in Edinburgh in 1767, 1768, 1769, and between 1780 and 1783 he divided his time between London and Edinburgh and settled in Edinburgh in 1784.

<sup>206</sup> Dixon, p.10 states that the Alexanders tried to persuade Martin to settle in Edinburgh in 1767. Dr Carlyle, (an important diarist) asked Martin to accompany him and his wife to Bath between 1769 and 1770, which the painter duly did. The Alexander family, including the Lord Provost and his two sons, commissioned Martin to paint the portrait of Benjamin Franklin now in the White House, see Dixon, p.23.

<sup>207</sup> Martin painted many portraits of Mansfield, for his patronage see Dixon, pp.33-34.

As an apprentice and assistant, Martin learnt to imitate Ramsay, and looked to this style of painting in his own work. It is therefore not surprising that Martin's early work owes much to Ramsay.<sup>208</sup> However, it is significant that Martin continued to exploit this ability even late in his career, when, in the 1780s he was resident in Edinburgh and the dominant force in portrait painting there.<sup>209</sup>

Martin, however, offered his sitters a choice. They could be painted in a Reynoldsian grand manner, for example his *Mrs Savigny, in the character of Selim in Barbarossa* (1771), or *Lady Frances Charteris* (Fig. 34) in which the allusions to Turkish dress in her drapery are echoed by exotic palms in the background.<sup>210</sup> His women of this type are formulaic in their beauty: an exaggerated curved figure is displayed through costume drapery, a low neckline, long neck and nose, and eyelids drawn in with a heavy line provide the sitter with a face that is in its constructed form adheres to a certain set of ideas of female beauty.<sup>211</sup> He continued to paint men in the grand manner whilst in Edinburgh, for example the portraits of *General Watson Gordon of Muirhouse* (Fig. 70) (1781) and *General Gabriel Christie* (Fig. 71) (1787).<sup>212</sup> But he also offered them the opportunity to be portrayed as a 'Ramsay', in a direct but delicately painted conversation, as with portraits of *John Hume of Ninewells* (1709-1786) (Fig. 72), brother of David Hume, or *Alexander Keith of Dunnottar and Ravelston* (1705-1792) (Fig. 73), thus demonstrating Ramsay's continued fashionability in Edinburgh long after he had stopped painting, and even after he was dead.

<sup>208</sup> Dixon, pp. 16-28.

<sup>209</sup> Dixon, p. 41 states that between 1784-7 Martin was the dominant force in Scottish portraiture.

<sup>210</sup> This first example is given by Dixon, p. 37 in a discussion of Reynolds's influence on Martin.

<sup>211</sup> Another example is the *Honorable Barbara Gray* (1787, oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in (76.2 x 63.5 cm), private collection) which was painted during Martin's time in Edinburgh, illustrated Dixon, plate 92.

<sup>212</sup> Dixon, p. 45, describes the composition of these portraits as generals standing in the front of the battlefield, men and cannon fire in the background. She further argues that these men are individuals fighting an individual battle and therefore examples of natural portrait painting. I do not agree with this interpretation, they are rather, rather conventional portraits executed in the tradition of male heroic portraiture.

The imitation of styles is not unusual in the eighteenth-century portrait business, but artists possessing lesser powers of invention might be expected to offer their clients the latest fashion in portrait styles. It was, after all, an extremely fashion-conscious trade, and, as will be shown, by the 1780s Edinburgh's public was well aware of the latest fashions through the increasing numbers of prints that were arriving from London after Reynolds, Kauffman and West.<sup>213</sup> The modish alternative to being painted in the manner of the most fashionable artist was to turn to the past, to the works of old masters, as in Gainsborough's Van Dyckean *Blue Boy* or Reynolds's reference to old masters in his portraits. For the imitation to refer to the recent past, to refer to an artist who might be regarded as old fashioned even if much admired, was new.<sup>214</sup>

Ramsay's influence on the Edinburgh portrait trade was therefore of extraordinary import, but was the dominance of an artist not permanently resident in that, provincial, city itself unusual? The closest comparison at this date is that offered by Joseph Wright who spent a considerable period in Liverpool and who, to the dismay of fellow artists, dominated the market for portraiture. However, there does not appear to be any evidence that, once he left, other artists imitated him to please patrons, probably because he continued to live for most of his life in Derby and was therefore still available.<sup>215</sup> After Gainsborough's departure from Bath after years of dominance, Wright's attempt to replace him as the town's fashionable artist was unsuccessful. However, it is unclear whether Wright's work did not appeal because of its innate qualities (which were the opposite of Gainsborough's), or

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<sup>213</sup> This point is made in chapter five, part II.

<sup>214</sup> *Blue Boy* (c1770, Huntington Library and Art Collections, San Marino, C.A.)

<sup>215</sup> For Wright's influence on the Liverpool market see chapter five, part I.



whether a decline in the market explains his lack of success.<sup>216</sup> Further comparisons with Ramsay's position are unavailable, as at this date there does not appear to have been another example of a highly successful London-based artist whose ties to the city of his birth remained as strong, nor whose influence continued so long after his death through imitation and emulation.

Yet, as this is exactly what both Millar and Martin were doing, we must ask why? Millar and Martin establish that even when sitters were unable to employ Ramsay, they wanted portraits painted that looked as though they had been painted by him. This might most obviously be put down to fashion, to some sort of cachet, for Ramsay was of course a royal portrait painter and fellow Scot, but one might argue that there is far more to it, and that imitating Ramsay was an expression of more important questions of identity. The portraits Ramsay painted in Edinburgh between 1753-4 were significant in terms of both the numbers painted, and the men and women portrayed. Ramsay's sitters were central figures in Scottish society; they made the laws, were its intellectual focus and the leading members of its remaining nobility. In short, the spectrum of portraits Ramsay painted in this period can be regarded as representing a group of men and women, bound together through their intellectual and social beliefs and, with regard to influence and position, central to the development of Scotland within the British state, after the defining moment of the 'Forty-Five.

The reason for this unusual and continued desire in Scotland to be painted in Ramsay's style is twofold. Firstly, the directness of his portraiture relates to a style that can be found in the work of earlier Scottish artists. It is evident in the forceful portraiture of

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<sup>216</sup> For Joseph Wright's relative failure to find patrons in Bath see Nicolson, Vol.1, pp. 12-13 and Susan Legoux Sloman, 'Artists' Picture Rooms in Eighteenth-Century Bath.' *Bath History*, Vol.VI, 1996, pp.132-

William Aikman (1682-1731) whose sitters, for example *Allan Ramsay (snr)*, meet the eyes of the viewer with a direct if slightly condescending gaze.<sup>217</sup> William Mosman (c1700-1771) and other near contemporaries also followed this same mode: Mosman's portrait of *Patrick Duff of Premnay*, William Denune's (c1712-50) portrait of the owner of the *Caledonian Mercury* newspaper *Thomas Ruddiman* and Cosmo Alexander's (1724-72) *James Duff of Corsindale* exemplifying a strong resonance that runs through the work of early eighteenth-century Scottish portrait painters.<sup>218</sup> In Ramsay's work it was not confined to the developments of the mid 1750s, but is evident slightly earlier in his 1748 painting of *Andrew Fletcher, Lord Milton*.<sup>219</sup> Secondly, Ramsay's portraits of 1753-4, in particular his half lengths, represent the development of this rather unflattering and coarse form of portraiture into a style that was sufficiently delicate and flattering for the more genteel and refined tastes of Scotland's new and expanding elite. He was painting a group of people who required refinement and sociability in their portraits to reflect their place in society and their philosophical construction of that society, values that altered and eventually diminished but which still had some resonance even in the 1780s.

The art market of the first half of the eighteenth century, in which bare and boldly drawn likenesses painted by locally based artists met the requirements of the lower gentry while the aristocracy turned to artists of national standing, no longer fitted the demographics and society of Edinburgh in the later part of the century. Much of Ramsay's popularity as a painter lay in his ability to provide a style of portraiture which, though drawing on what can be regarded as a distinctive quality of Scottish portraiture, was, in its sophisticated, delicate,

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<sup>217</sup> *Allan Ramsay (snr)* (oil on canvas, 30 x 26in (75.7 x 64cm), SNPG).

<sup>218</sup> William Mosman, *Patrick Duff of Premnay* (1738, oil on canvas, 29¼ x 24½in (75.6 x 62.2cm) private collection), William Denune, *Thomas Ruddiman* (1749, oil on canvas, 29 x 25in (74 x 63.8cm), SNPG), and Cosmo Alexander, *James Duff of Corsindale* (1760, oil on canvas, 29¼ x 24½in (74.3 x 61.6cm), NGS).

and conversational manner a reflection of the ideas and concerns of this new society; a society in which the intellectual elite of university and legal profession held equal sway with the remaining aristocracy.

The clamour to be associated with Ramsay's Select Society may arguably offer a parallel to the great and continued desire to be painted in his style. As membership of the Select Society identified the individual as one who took part in the central debates of the Scottish nation, so being painted by, or in the manner of, Ramsay, gave the sitter membership of a form or type of group identity through association. This is in effect not far from the simple argument that cachet played a large part in this desire to be associated with a painter who painted Scotland's elite (both those based in London and those who dominated the social and political life of Edinburgh), and royalty.

It may therefore be argued that the specific form of portraiture Ramsay developed in the early 1750s became associated with the members of Edinburgh's elite of academics, lawyers, the clergy and aristocracy, and prominent bankers and merchant families. For, other than the visits paid to the city by David Martin, or minor itinerant artists, the city lacked a portrait painter who was able to offer another vision, or identity, for its elite. The presence of George Chalmers from 1760 to 1765 offered the opportunity to be painted by an artist admired by such luminaries as Pompeo Batoni, however, Chalmers trained under Ramsay, and as the Irwins point out, his manner also approached that of Ramsay.<sup>220</sup> The only other artist resident in the city was Millar, who cannot be regarded as anything other than a copyist.

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<sup>219</sup> *Andrew Fletcher, Lord Milton* (oil on canvas, 30 x 25in (76 x 63.2cm) private collection).

<sup>220</sup> 'Sometimes he came close to Ramsay in pose and colouring, as in his *Anne Kennedy*.' Irwin, p.73.

Whether the Ramsay portrait style was regarded as some form of collective expression can only be the subject of conjecture. However, in its affiliation with the methods and values of the Scottish moral sense school it undoubtedly gave visual expression to the city's society, and to its intellectual and moral sense. Therefore it may be said to have expressed a form of Scottish collective identity that was arguably national in consequence. Further, the continued desire to be painted in Ramsay's manner would seem to support the idea that his portraits represented more than simply individuals. He portrayed the country's most important men and women, and it is arguable that membership of this elite group was something that was sought, and perhaps achieved in a visual sense through Ramsay's style of painting.

Although a distinctive Scottish identity has been witnessed in the work of Allan Ramsay, the import of Britishness was beginning to impact on Scottish society just as these portraits were being painted. This, along with the cultural consequences of the Union, will now be considered through a comparison of the art market in Edinburgh with those of a number of English towns and cities.

**Chapter Five**  
**Enlightenment Edinburgh:**  
**Provincial Society and Cultural Production.**

**Part I**  
**The Fine Arts**

Consideration of the various national identities extant within Scottish culture in the later eighteenth century acknowledges a diversity to some extent circumscribed by the formation of Britishness. Britishness was an emerging cohesive force, formed mainly through common conquests and enemies, a Protestant faith and a common sense of otherness.<sup>1</sup> But as has been suggested above, rather than supersede other national identities, it added to the complexity of identities already extant within the peoples of Britain, and most explicitly in Scotland led to the formation of North Britishness. This chapter is concerned with the relationship between the intended politically cohesive force of Britishness and the divergent identities existing and fluctuating within Scotland as a sense of Britishness began to assert itself throughout the nation. However, it must also be acknowledged that although the political aim of Britishness was an inclusive and cohesive identity, its initial manifestation in Scotland, North Britishness, was a dominant Anglo-Britishness brought about by the failure to construct an influential and genuinely pan-British national identity, co-existed uneasily with Scottishness.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter will consider the market for both fine and popular art in eighteenth-century Edinburgh. In addition it will compare the nature and extent of this market in comparison with English provincial towns and cities. This comparison is made in the

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<sup>1</sup> Colley (1994), p.5.

<sup>2</sup> Kidd (1996), pp.361-382, esp. pp.377-378.

light of arguments that have been raised over Scotland's status, in particular whether, following the Union, she continued as a nation or whether she became simply a province of England. This chapter not only attempts to address the question of provinciality, but also takes into account scholarship that considers the nature of local and national culture, a debate that can be seen to have strong parallels with the co-existence of Scottish and British identity in eighteenth-century Scotland.

Positioning Scotland, and in particular Edinburgh, within a provincial context enables one to consider the subject of national identity within a British as opposed to exclusively Scottish context, and addresses the question of English influence on Scotland's culture. The debate over province or nation is of further significance as it raises the question of how Scotland was perceived, and how it perceived itself. Was it a province that sought to emulate London, was it a colony with an inferiority complex? Or did Scotland retain a culture and self-perception that set her apart as a distinct nation within the British nation state? It will be maintained that such simple models, models that imply either a disparaging interpretation of provinciality or an aggrandizing Scottish nationalistic perspective, are unable to provide a comprehensive and constructive framework within which to discuss complex questions of national identity or its manifestation in culture. Rather this dissertation will support the argument outlined below that local (Scottish) and national (British) culture co-existed, and will seek to use this framework, of richness and diversity, in a discussion of the expression of national identity implicated in cultural consumption and production evidenced in this research.

The concept of Scotland as a province of England was first advanced by John Clive and Bernard Bailyn in 1954.<sup>3</sup> They paralleled Scotland's position with that of

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<sup>3</sup> John Clive and Bernard Bailyn, 'England's Cultural Provinces - Scotland and America', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 1954, Vol.XI, Series 3, pp.200-213.

North America, in an attempt to examine the circumstances of the Enlightenment in these regions; their position has been substantially developed by Nicholas Phillipson.<sup>4</sup> The key note of provincial culture within the Enlightenment, established by these scholars, confirms the importance of the concept of provinciality to any discussion of Scottish art in the late eighteenth century.

Critical discussion of these issues has been particularly prevalent in literary studies. Most influentially David Daiches has argued that there was a 'paradox' in Scottish culture. That, for example, the Union produced forces which worked consciously for the improvement of agriculture and industry in Scotland, but that these forces also seemed to militate against Scottish national culture or even prosperity (in the case of the Highland clearances).<sup>5</sup> Alexander Murdoch and Richard B. Sher have discussed critically the influential work of Daiches and have argued that his dualist approach has led to Scottish culture of this period being regarded as deeply divided between high English culture, polished and institutionalised, and the culture of the Scottish people, described as informal, oral and vernacular.<sup>6</sup> Murdoch and Sher argue that while this perception of a divided culture has a number of legitimate theoretical foundations, it is an approach which requires modification, 'Scottish literature and learning in this period cannot always be made to fit the model of two separate and distinct cultural works.'<sup>7</sup> The cultivation by Scots of English in their speech and writing and Scots in their thoughts and feelings should not, they argue, be regarded as cultural schizophrenia. Rather, they contend, it is possible to accept this linguistic tension as an

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<sup>4</sup> Phillipson (1975). Phillipson agrees with Clive and Bailyn on the importance of provincial culture to the history of the Enlightenment, however, he rejects Clive and Bailyn's position that Scotland's provincial identity was a signifier of inferiority either imagined or real. My own position is particularly indebted to the work of Phillipson.

<sup>5</sup> Daiches, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> They also discuss the similarly influential work of David Craig. Alexander Murdoch & Richard B. Sher 'Literary and Learned Culture' in Devine & Mitchison, pp. 127-142, p. 125.

<sup>7</sup> Murdoch and Sher, p. 128.

expression of a rich and multilingual culture, in which language was chosen for its appropriateness in communication, and not as the stripping of Scottish culture by England.<sup>8</sup>

Dror Wahrman has argued that amongst the British elites (the propertied class, both patrician and middling sort) there was a cultural-political divide between 'an emerging wide-ranging "national society" and an alternative polymorphous communal-provincial culture' where national society refers to a nation-wide as opposed to nationalistic society.<sup>9</sup> The thesis put forward by Wahrman thus has strong parallels with the Scottish and English cultural divide long established in the work of Daiches and David Craig, though he agrees with Phillipson and Murdoch and Sher that in Scotland this division was not so clear cut, nor as divisive to Scottish culture as Daiches and Craig have proposed.<sup>10</sup> Local and national culture therefore co-existed in a creative and positive relationship, to some degree appropriating rather than emulating London-based culture in the provinces (a view that Brewer amongst others has also argued and which is to be considered below).<sup>11</sup> This model of co-existence receives further support in Peter Borsay's work on the English provinces, which maintains that while the impact of London-based culture on the provincial towns was undeniable, the 'dominance model' of cultural change in which ideas originating in the metropolis are diffused to the provinces is problematic.<sup>12</sup> Rather, he advocates a pluralist model that would recognise that 'ideas flowed into the metropolis as well as out of it, and characterise the capital more as a

<sup>8</sup> Murdoch & Sher, p.129. The term 'cultural schizophrenia' is taken from Daiches, p.11.

<sup>9</sup> Dror Wahrman, 'National society, communal culture: an argument about the recent historiography of eighteenth-century Britain', *Social History*, vol. 17, 1992, pp. 43-72, p.43. His argument is based upon numerous empirical studies of eighteenth-century English provincial life, finding in them implicit and explicit practical examples of this theory, which extends in its applications both to Wales and Scotland.

<sup>10</sup> Wahrman, pp. 50-53.

<sup>11</sup> John Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, London, 1997.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Borsay, 'The London Connection: Cultural diffusion and the Eighteenth-Century Provincial Town.' *The London Journal*, vol.19, no.1, 1994, pp.21-35, p.27.



market place, entrepôt, and melting-pot for culture than as a place where it emerged- as it were- spontaneously.<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, understanding Scotland to have been a province of England is an established political and historical position, which has proved constructive to the historian of the Enlightenment in understanding the development of that intellectual and cultural phenomenon. Further, the co-existence, partial synthesis of, and interplay between English and Scottish cultures and identities within the specific milieu of Edinburgh's social and cultural history enables one to draw parallels with the national and provincial contiguity of cultures in English provincial towns and cities.

Population growth and urban expansion characterised the demographic development of Britain in the eighteenth century. Commerce, trade, manufacture and agricultural improvement lay at the root of these, often dramatic, changes in the makeup of the nation.<sup>14</sup> The effects of this development were political, economic and cultural; to paraphrase Peter Borsay there was a British urban renaissance.<sup>15</sup> The expansion of provincial towns and cities in terms of population and wealth, with the concomitant social and cultural changes, were of fundamental importance to the practice of art in Britain. The emergence of regional schools of art in the nineteenth century, in for example Norwich, has ensured that the by then well established urban environments of provincial towns and cities have been acknowledged to some extent as having an art history that was locally specific.<sup>16</sup> Trevor Fawcett's *The Rise of English Provincial Art* implicitly places the growth in provincial art within the confines of the nineteenth

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<sup>13</sup> Borsay (1994), p.31.

<sup>14</sup> See Langford for an authoritative overview of these changes in England over the second half of the eighteenth century. For urban population growth, life and improvement see pp.417-432.

<sup>15</sup> Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance Culture and Society in the Provincial Town 1660-1770*, Oxford, 1989, is the most broad ranging study of the development of English provincial society. T.M. Devine & Rosalind Mitchison (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland. Vol. I, 1760-1830*, Edinburgh, 1988 provides similar information for Scotland.

century, and demonstrates that it was at this period that a more cohesive and consistent establishment of art institutions and patronage took place outside of London.<sup>17</sup>

However, this process began in the eighteenth century, a period of urban expansion whose culture was characterised by a prosperous and burgeoning middling sort who both wished, and were able, to take part in public and private polite entertainment.<sup>18</sup>

There is no broad-ranging study of provincial art markets, or of the patronage, expectations and experiences of provincial artists in eighteenth-century Britain. Fawcett's study of the nineteenth century is useful in demonstrating the absence in provincial towns and cities of regular public exhibitions or art schools. But given the slow and often difficult fruition of such artistic activities in London during the eighteenth century, their establishment within the provinces can hardly be expected to have enjoyed an unproblematic progression.<sup>19</sup>

Edinburgh, the cultural and political centre of Scotland, dominated the Scottish art market, and importantly its culture had arguably (Scottish) national significance. It has been argued that the local culture of Edinburgh's middling sorts replaced the national culture of Scotland's elite, when its members left for London. Phillipson has traced Scotland's historical provincial relationship with England from the seventeenth century through to the second half of the eighteenth century. In the seventeenth century, dissatisfaction with their relationship with England led to a desire amongst the Scottish political elite for an independence of political stability and national progress, best realised it was believed, through the encouragement of economic growth. As Phillipson

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<sup>16</sup>For a general introduction to the Norwich School see Andrew Moore, *The Norwich School of Artists*, London, 1985.

<sup>17</sup>Fawcett (1974).

<sup>18</sup>For middle class culture see Langford, pp.59-121 and Brewer (1997), *passim*.

<sup>19</sup>There exists a small quantity of disparate literature on a number of English provincial cities, and this research will be synthesised to form a comparative study of the art market in Edinburgh during the later eighteenth century.

points out the paradox of this route to independence was that it depended upon closer political relations with England, and the act of Union of 1707.<sup>20</sup>

The dissolution of the Scottish Parliament fragmented the Scottish elite, and its cohesive sense of identity as the upper echelons of society moved to London. This 'crisis of identity' was resolved in a way unique to Scotland, in the 1750s, with Scotland's new resident elite propounding an ideology of Improvement that was resonant of the pre-Union oligarchy. This was remarkable given the very different political status of the two elites, the first an oligarchy that presiding over a national parliament, and the second a provincially based oligarchy, albeit one which was also at the political, administrative and social centre of Scottish government.<sup>21</sup> So despite fragmentation, a continuity of ideology was retained, and after a period of crisis a similar identity was resumed.

The ideology of Improvement was key to the identity of the Scottish provincial based elite.<sup>22</sup> Significantly, the leading role in the dissemination of this ideology in the second half of the eighteenth century was taken not by the aristocracy but by the literati. After the demise of the Society of Improvers in the Knowledge of Agriculture (an aristocratic organisation which espoused the old aristocratic ideology and identity of Improvement) following the Forty-Five, the literati-led Select Society became the main vehicle through which the aristocracy transmitted their ideology.<sup>23</sup> The Select Society and its off shoot the *Edinburgh Review*, together with The Board of the Trustees for Improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland, can therefore be said to have espoused typically provincial ideals in their desire to improve to the standards set by England and London in particular. These were also ideals that can be seen as historically

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<sup>20</sup> Within this context, Phillipson interprets the Union as a successful revolution, necessitating within the elite a changing relationship with England and their role as a governing elite, Phillipson (1975), p.409.

<sup>21</sup> Phillipson (1975), p.441.

<sup>22</sup> Phillipson (1975), *passim*.

<sup>23</sup> Phillipson (1975), pp.423 & 444.

and distinctly identified with a Scottish elite, although the language and processes they used were English in orientation. Therefore, to analyse Edinburgh as a provincial city assists in inspecting both the cultural complexity of the national identity found in the city and the Scottish nation, and enables one to draw on the comparative example of English provinces.

The question of Edinburgh as a provincial and cultural centre is to be approached in two ways. The first will be concerned with the production and marketing of fine arts, and the second with populist aspects of the art trade.<sup>24</sup> By considering both fine and popular art, not only will a comprehensive picture of Edinburgh's visual culture be drawn but art accessible to all members of the 'elite', as specified by Wahrman, will be considered. Part I utilises existing scholarship on the fine arts in various provincial towns in order to draw a comparison of the support found in these locations to that found in Edinburgh. Studies of Glasgow, Manchester, Norwich, Leeds and Bristol will elucidate the importance of local artists and local markets, and the relative import within these of the influence of London. Part II relies upon a survey of art-related advertisements, placed in provincial newspapers, to provide both quantitative and qualitative information on populist art in provincial Britain.

Research into urban life has tended to be carried out within national boundaries, ignoring the concept of a British state and thereby promulgating the notion that Scotland and England lack a commonality of urban development. Historical research in general also tends to highlight separation rather than union and uniformity within, but not between, England and Scotland. Peter Borsay confines his study to England and *People and Society in Scotland* covers comparable ground to Borsay, but in Scotland.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> I shall define 'fine' and 'popular' art later.

<sup>25</sup> Borsay (1989), *passim* and Devine and Mitchison, *passim*.

However, it is clear from the evidence presented that during the later eighteenth century these nations experienced broadly similar changes in terms of urban expansion and within the urban environment itself.

The second half of the eighteenth century saw large increases in urban growth. Emerging manufacturing towns and industrial centres grew most rapidly, and while regional centres and county towns were less prolific they still witnessed a significant population increase. The growth in the numbers of Scots living in large towns (populations of over 10,000) during the second half of the eighteenth century has been described as explosive. While England was at this time the most urban country in Western Europe, Scotland, seventh in 1750, had by 1800, moved to fourth position.<sup>26</sup>

The demographics of urban growth are not simply reflexive of a general growth in population. It was also dependent upon the immigration of people from country to city, where the development of industrial cities attracted permanent settlement. For example, the population of Leeds grew from six thousand at the beginning of the eighteenth century to twelve thousand by 1750. It numbered over sixteen in 1771 and in 1801 more than thirty thousand.<sup>27</sup> Urban growth developed alongside increased prosperity.<sup>28</sup> This increase in prosperity can be attributed both to the county elite spending money in towns, and to the increased commercialisation of society; the

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<sup>26</sup> Devine and Mitchison, pp. 22-29. This information is based upon towns with a population of over 10,000. In 1700 the increase in Scotland's urban population was fifty-one percent, in 1750 one hundred and twenty-four, and in 1800, one hundred and thirty-two. The equivalent figures for England and Wales are forty-five, forty-two and eighty-three. Comparison over the period 1760 - 1830 finds Poland to be the only country to have exceeded Scotland in the rate of urban population growth. Langford, p.418 states that in 1700 one in five Englishmen lived in something that contemporaries might describe as a town, by 1800 this figure was about one in three.

<sup>27</sup> Borsay (1989) p.26 and Chalklin p.338. Similar increases can be found in Manchester, 8,000 in 1700, almost 20,000 in 1758, over 42,000 in 1788 and in 1801 over 70,000. See Borsay (1989), pp.8 & 26, and Chalklin, p.338.

<sup>28</sup> Langford, p.419, argues that 'while population growth was not the same as prosperity...there were underlying tendencies that sustained even cities missing out on rapid economic developments.'

dominance of consumer as opposed to landed society, based upon trade and manufacture rather than inheritance.

Urban centres may therefore be characterised as expanding demographically and financially, but the nature of the urban environment was also continuing to change in ways which altered the experiences and lives of those resident in, or those visiting, them. Towns were believed to have a civilizing effect. Civic improvements were carried out, public and semi-public buildings and spaces were constructed, and sociable activities were played out within them. Theatres, assembly rooms, and public gardens were places for the polite to gather, to socialise and to engage in civilizing sociability. Civilizing and socializing was also apparent in the private and semi-private worlds of clubs and learned societies, that had further educational and improving benefits. Art would obviously have played a part within this world. However, the extent to which, in the rapidly developing provincial towns of Britain, art was publicly exhibited, viewed, or otherwise consumed or sold has not been the subject of as wide a ranging study as that presented here.<sup>29</sup>

Change and progress reverberated throughout urban centres, expressed in the very foundation stones of public buildings which announced the growing civility of the town's people, a process furthered and symbolised, by buildings of social or civic import. The benefits of the urban environment, and the progress of its people, were developed through pursuits and spaces that promoted the ideas of sociability and education. Assemblies, the theatre, concerts, walks, balls, learned and educational societies, planned architectural spaces that exuded order, control and intellectual knowledge, all contributed to the promotion of sociable and intellectual exchange.

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<sup>29</sup> Despite art's importance to eighteenth-century urban society, very little research has been carried out into the role it played in British provincial towns of the eighteenth century. Although Borsay (1989) covers most comprehensively society, leisure and other civilizing pursuits, he almost entirely ignores the provincial art market, drawing schools and auctioneers. Brewer (1997) offers a case study of the

The construction of urban society, its material and social fabric, and spheres of influence saw considerable alteration in the eighteenth century. The Enlightenment idea of progress would seem to characterise contemporary and later accounts of the physical and social changes that occurred, although morality was seen to suffer a concomitant decline. Progress is a central theme of William Creech's (1745-1815) report on the economy and manners of Edinburgh.<sup>30</sup> Produced in the form of letters to Sir John Sinclair and contained within the latter's *Statistical Account*, the report charts the progress of the city, her people, industry, intellectual and social life from 1763 to 1792. It had the express purpose of 'examining, whether, as individuals, or as a people, we were improving or declining', the term improvement being used in both an economic and moral sense.<sup>31</sup>

The question of Edinburgh's position as a national or provincial centre of art is complex. Any such distinction places an unnatural, if convenient, division within what is a rich combination of British (national) and Scottish (local) cultures, which can be compared with the local, national, divide identified in English provincial culture. By comparing Edinburgh's art market with those found in English provincial towns an indication of the relative importance of national and local culture for these towns and cities will be ascertained. In Edinburgh this will be interpreted as an assessment of the importance of Scottish (local) culture relative to (British) national and metropolitan

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internationally famous wood engraver Thomas Bewick who lived in Newcastle, pp. 499-530. See also Langford, pp.430-432, for urban improvements in the provinces.

<sup>30</sup> Creech (1745-1815) was a prominent printer and bookseller, and host to the literati. The breakfast room in his High Street shop was used by the literati as a lounge and was known as 'Creech's levée.' Chitnis, p.41, fn.13.

<sup>31</sup> William Creech., 'Letters to Sir John Sinclair, Bart' in Sir John Sinclair Of Ulster (ed.), General editors Donald J. Withrington & Ian R. Grant, *The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791-1799*, Vol. II, The Lothians, 1975, pp. 21-59.

culture.<sup>32</sup> Although this chapter necessarily looks to cultural and economic indicators as expressions of national identity, politics remains of central importance in understanding Scotland's relationship with England, be that as a province or as a nation.

Edinburgh did of course retain her position as capital of Scotland and was the leading city of North Britain, and her continued sense of importance was expressed through expansion and civic improvement. However, even before this physical expansion the sphere of Edinburgh's political and social influence was undoubtedly broad. According to William Creech the provision of trade and manufacture was limited in the 1760s. Creech states that in 1763 purveyors of luxury goods were few, haberdashers and perfumeries were unknown, and although barbers and wigmakers were numerous there were few hairdressers.<sup>33</sup> By the 1780s and 1790s luxury trades concerned with personal adornment - the milliner, linen draper, hosier, glover and hatter - were all commonly found in the city.<sup>34</sup> Creech also reported increases in various manufactures in the city between the 1760s and 1790s, as well as increased revenue at banks and in trade at the port of Leith.<sup>35</sup> Edinburgh's population expanded rapidly in the third quarter of the century, although increases had been slow up until that point. In 1755 her population was 57,000 and by 1775 this had risen to 70,000. Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee also followed this demographic pattern. Glasgow's growth in the

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<sup>32</sup> This study of the consumption and production of visual culture seeks to complement the arguments on literary culture put forward by Murdoch and Sher, and follows their amended reading of Daiches' cultural schizophrenia, discussed earlier.

<sup>33</sup> Creech's account appears to be fairly accurate, although there is evidence of small discrepancies. R.A. Houston in *Social Change in the Age of the Enlightenment: Edinburgh, 1660-1760*, Oxford, 1994, pp.368-9 notes that in the early 1730s the commonest designation was that of indweller followed by stabler and horsehirers. There were many crafts recorded including baxter, mason, wright, cobbler, brewer, flesher, painter, glass grinder, wig maker and upholsterer. He also records that men licensed to sell small wares included a druggist, gardener, weaver, bookseller and significantly a perfumer. Helen M. Dingwall, *Late Seventeenth-Century Edinburgh. A Demographic Study*, Aldershot, 1994, pp.133-4 argues that the affluence of Edinburgh in the late seventeenth century is demonstrated by the presence of twenty-four goldsmiths, twenty-nine wigmakers and many tailors, she also records the presence of two perfumers.

<sup>34</sup> Creech, p.32.

<sup>35</sup> Creech, p. 40. Shore duties at Leith increased from £ 580 in 1763 to £4000 in 1783. Creech defines shore duty as a small tax paid to the city of Edinburgh on landing goods at the quays.



last quarter of the century was phenomenal, her population doubling from 43,000 in 1780 to 84,000 by 1800.<sup>36</sup>

Trade therefore played an increasingly important part in the wealth of the city and her citizens from the 1760s onwards.<sup>37</sup> The importance of trade to the city is further illustrated by a survey of middle class occupations in Scotland in the later eighteenth century. In Edinburgh sixty-five percent of the middling sorts can be described as businessmen (makers and sellers of goods). However, this figure is significantly smaller than that found in other Scottish towns, indicating that Edinburgh was substantially different to other Scottish urban centres. In Glasgow the figure was eighty percent and in a small town such as Dumfermline, ninety per cent. Edinburgh's middling sorts were comprised of substantially more professionals - predominantly the law, the church and the emerging medical professions. Twenty per cent were employed professionally in Edinburgh, in comparison with no more than ten per cent elsewhere.<sup>38</sup> The relatively high proportion of Edinburgh's population that may be described as middle ranking consumers must have some bearing on the availability of luxury goods, including art, there in comparison with other provincial cities.

In relation to English urban centres, Edinburgh's population in the 1750s compares with the largest provincial town in England, Bristol - which had a very similar population of 50,000. Newcastle upon Tyne may also be compared in these respects, a port and provincial capital, and like Bristol and London she had a large hinterland of goods to draw upon. Although significantly smaller than Edinburgh or Bristol at this

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<sup>36</sup> Lynch, (1992), pp. 352 & 411. Bruce Lenman, *Integration, Enlightenment, and Industrialization Scotland 1746-1832*, London, 1981, pp.3-4 gives slightly lower figures for these cities, they nonetheless show similarly large growths in population over this period.

<sup>37</sup> The adjacent port of Leith cannot be divorced from the city.

<sup>38</sup> Stana Nenadic, 'The Rise of the Urban Middle Class' in Devine and Mitchison, pp. 109-126, p.111. Nenadic defines the professions as those receiving fees and stipends. However, as Borsay (1989), p.30, points out the professions were themselves dominated by the gentry and lower aristocracy.

time - 29,000, she was a large city in comparison to most English centres. During the latter half of the century, Liverpool and Manchester also developed as regional capitals, their growth predicated upon the expansion of trade and manufacturing in their hinterland. By 1750 Liverpool's population was approximately 22,000 and Manchester's population grew from 8,000 to almost 20,000 between 1700 and 1758.<sup>39</sup> As provincial capitals, all of these cities contained a mixture of gentry and trade in their populations.

The other towns with which I shall be comparing Edinburgh are less similar in terms of population and economy. Ipswich was a large port, comparable with Yarmouth and Liverpool at the beginning of the century. As the century progressed the economy of the town became more diverse and consumer orientated.<sup>40</sup> This type of economy is also found in towns such as Norwich, York, and Chester and is a reflection of their status, defined by Borsay, as social centres. Norwich, a provincial capital of 36,000 people in 1752 also tended towards this type of economy in the later eighteenth century, and like other provincial capitals her middle class and elite population were involved in a mixture of professions and trade.<sup>41</sup>

Leeds and Derby are the smallest comparative centres to be discussed. Derby was a shire town, but also an important centre for brewing and silk weaving, and lying on the Derwent (made navigable in 1720), was part of the hinterland of the Humber estuary. Defoe described her, as might be expected of a shire town, as more gentry than trade.<sup>42</sup> At the beginning of the century Leeds was somewhat similar to Manchester as the centre of both a rural and industrial region, but the population of Leeds grew less rapidly rising

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<sup>39</sup> Borsay (1989), pp. 8, 9, 24.

<sup>40</sup> Borsay (1989), pp.8, 34, 35.

<sup>41</sup> Borsay (1989), pp.8, 30, 36.

<sup>42</sup> Borsay (1989), pp.8, 24, 25, 29.

from only 6,000 to 12,000. This still represents a doubling of the population and therefore substantial growth.<sup>43</sup>

Bath was an exceptional town during the eighteenth century. It is difficult to characterise a resort which hosted a season of such magnitude, and which attracted such large numbers of the nation's elite, as simply another provincial town. In this sense it provides a foil for Edinburgh's special position as former capital. The resident population of this provincial capital was 6,000 in 1750, however, this figure does not take account of the many visitors attracted to her curative and consumptive delights.<sup>44</sup>

While the relative degree of trade, manufacture or gentrified existence varies from town to town, the growth in consumer society was vital to the development of urban centres across Britain in the later eighteenth century. While industry was often dependent upon the geographic location of a town and the resources of its surrounding area, trade, whilst assisted by proximity to the sea, was feasible on a small scale everywhere.

Communications, between towns and within them, developed as part of this commercial expansion. Publishing played a large part in this, and in particular newspapers whose circulation was much broader in geographic terms than may be imagined. By 1760, one hundred and fifty newspaper publications had been introduced in over fifty towns in England. The *York Courant* had agents in over forty-three towns in an area that ranged from Scarborough to Manchester, and the *Gloucester Journal* had a similarly broad coverage.<sup>45</sup> The circulation and potential readership of newspapers is a

<sup>43</sup> Borsay (1989), for Leeds pp.8 & 26.

<sup>44</sup> Borsay (1989), p. 31. R. S. Neale, *Bath 1680-1850 A Social History or Valley of Pleasure, yet a sink of iniquity*, London, 1981, p.38 notes that in 1765 one hundred and forty-eight 'persons of quality' were amongst Bath's visitors that year. The princes, dukes and duchesses, marquises and marchionesses, earls, countesses, viscounts and viscountesses, barons and baronesses, ambassadors, archbishops and bishops that comprised these persons, represents only a small and elite portion of the city's visitors.

<sup>45</sup> Borsay (1989), pp. 129 & 214.

significant factor in the consideration of artistic products advertised in the provincial papers.

Provincial newspapers carried a mixture of London news, politics, war - often derived directly from London papers - as well as local information, advertisements and announcements. Thus in one of the most important forms of communication of the late eighteenth century, a combination of local and national interests can be found, reflecting the political and social interests of the readership, as well as providing information of practical use.

Architecture as we have seen was one of the most overt manifestations of the mixing of local and national society, found in the developing provincial town.<sup>46</sup> The cramped surroundings of mid-eighteenth-century Edinburgh have already been discussed, but they were aggravated by the poor state of repair of a number of its characteristically tall buildings. The collapse of a six storey building, the residence of some far from impoverished families, led to a survey of the old town being carried out, and in turn the publication, in 1752, of a pamphlet outlining *Proposals for carrying on certain public works in the city of Edinburgh*. This pamphlet was fundamental in expressing both the initial idea of developing the city, and the intellectual and political considerations that were to shape the making of Classical Edinburgh.<sup>47</sup> In its assertion of the benefits urban improvements might bring it was typical of its time.

Among the several causes to which the prosperity of a nation may be ascribed, the situation, conveniency, and beauty of a capital, are surely not the least considerable. A capital when these circumstances happen fortunately to concur, should naturally become the centre for trade and commerce, of learning and the arts, of politeness and refinement of every kind. No sooner will the advantages which these naturally produce, be felt and experienced through the nation, and universally promote the same spirit of industry and

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<sup>46</sup> As Wahrman, p.49 points out, Borsay's discussion of architecture draws on precisely the local, national, duality his argument seeks to expatiate.

<sup>47</sup> Youngson (1966), pp.1-17.

improvement.<sup>48</sup>

'The Proposal' is also a reminder that although within this discussion Edinburgh is placed within the context of a British provincial city, she continued to be regarded as Scotland's national capital. The benefits to a society of a fine and elegant civic façade was fairly conventional wisdom and had been extolled by Alberti, they were also pronounced at the opening of the Exchange at Bristol in 1743 –

Public edifices, have in all times, been had in esteem, and considered as manifestations of the wisdom and grandeur of a state ... That the trade of this city may flourish and increase, and the prosperity and reputation of it be daily advanced, are the ardent wishes of the corporation, this noble pile, raised by their liberal hand, more eminently testifies than words can express.<sup>49</sup>

It was London that provided the finest example of a capital of fortunate circumstances. The author of Edinburgh's *Proposal* admired London's geographical advantage –situated close to the sea and on a flat plain. But London's advantages also lay in the 'neatness of and accommodation of its private houses; the beauty and conveniency of its numerous streets and open squares, of its buildings and bridges, its large parks and extensive walks.'<sup>50</sup> The view of London, as a city, expressed in the 'Proposal' is more positive than it perhaps deserved. It did not express itself as the capital of a great nation in any way architecturally, and this was noticed by contemporary writers such as James Ralph in his 1734 *A Critical Review of the Publick Buildings*

<sup>48</sup> Quoted in Youngson (1966), p.4.

<sup>49</sup> Leon Battista Alberti, *The Ten Books of Architecture. The 1755 Leoni Edition*, New York, 1986, preface. 'But why need I mention not only how much Benefit and Delight, but how much Glory to Architecture has brought to Nations, which have cultivated it both at home and abroad? Who that has built nay publick Edifice does not think himself honoured by it...Men of publick spirits approve and rejoice when you have raised a fine Wall or Portico, and adorned it with Portals, Columns, and a handsome Roof, knowing you have thereby not only served yourself, but them too, having by this generous Use of your Wealth, gained an Addition of great Honour to yourself, your Family, your Descendents, and your City.' Quotation from the opening of the Bristol Exchange is given in Borsay (1989), p.253.

<sup>50</sup> Quoted in Youngson (1966), p.4. Edinburgh's improvement was much concerned with the domestic townscape, but many public buildings such as the Exchange, College, and Register House were also built with an eye to grand and imposing vistas. See Youngson (1966), pp.52-69 & 133-203.

*Statues and Ornaments In, and about Westminster.* Amongst many critical remarks on the architecture and architectural layout of the city, in a dedication to Lord Burlington he argued that, 'No nation can reproach us for want of expence in our publick buildings, but all nations may for our want of elegance and discernment in the execution.'<sup>51</sup>

The fashionable, elegant and refined classical architecture, embodying learning as well as grandeur, was as evident in the provinces; at Bath, obviously, but also at Buxton, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds where private and public buildings were built in the classical style. In Bristol residential squares were formed in a development which emulated London's West End and whilst the crescent, circus, walks and assembly rooms of Bath created a geographically disparate, if sociable town.<sup>52</sup> The exchanges, assembly rooms and theatres were public buildings designed, in the classical style, to demonstrate the national importance, civility, and sociability of the city and her people.<sup>53</sup> However, as Peter Borsay points out, the architecture of urban development was characteristic of 'social differentiation'.<sup>54</sup> He argues that 'The wealthy and prosperous eagerly adopted the new vogues in building, but the majority of people continued to occupy houses largely constructed in the traditional vernacular manner.' Further, whereas a defining feature of vernacular style was its local character, classicism was an overtly outward looking and international style.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> James Ralph, *A Critical Review of the Publick Buildings Statues and Ornaments In, and about Westminster*, London, 1734, p.5. Criticism was also forthcoming from J. A. Rouquet in *L'Etat des Arts en Angleterre* published in 1755 (translated and reprinted as *The Present State of the Arts in England*, London, 1970).

<sup>52</sup> Borsay (1989), pp.46 & 98. For Bath see also Neale.

<sup>53</sup> Assemblies, music festivals and theatre performances proliferated in specifically designed buildings. The Assembly Rooms at Norwich were built in 1754, and while Leeds had theirs by 1726, Derby's were built in 1763 and Bristol's in 1755. However, the holding of assemblies can be dated to earlier in these towns, Derby held them from the early eighteenth century. For assemblies see Borsay (1989), esp. pp.157-159, and pp.336-349.

<sup>54</sup> This term has similar implications to Wahrman's local/ national society.

<sup>55</sup> Borsay (1989), p.289.

The 'emulation' of London-based culture in the provinces is, as John Brewer has remarked, presented as an 'improving tale', and one that therefore implies the superiority of London-based culture, although it is also a story told from a London perspective.<sup>56</sup> This latter view was also argued by Clive and Bailyn, but disputed by Phillipson. Clive and Bailyn argued that the crucial element within provincial identity was a sense of inferiority with respect to Englishness (although, an 'inferior' culture would of course tend to remain invisible), for Phillipson provincial identity in Edinburgh lay within an attempt by the elite of this society to recast and fulfil an honourable and historically long-standing role of patriarchal improvers.<sup>57</sup>

Clive and Bailyn base their theory on letters and quotations that are themselves open to alternative interpretations. Passages from Adam Smith and David Hume convey an acknowledgement of their culture's provincial status, but not, I think, of inferiority. They, perhaps with an assured modesty and flattery, assure their correspondents that life in Edinburgh can be of little interest beyond a small geographical area, in contrast to the widespread interest that existed in London life. For example, a letter from David Hume to John Clephane in 1756 states 'we people in the country (for such you Londoners esteem our city) are apt to be troublesome to you people in the town; we are vastly glad to receive letters which convey intelligence to us of things we should otherwise have been ignorant of, and can pay them back with nothing but provincial stories which are in no way interesting.' This expression that life was much less interesting and exciting in the provinces does not necessarily imply a sense of less worth (and may indeed be ironic). But as another quotation suggests was an awareness, within the province, that life was carried out differently, being slower and more relaxed; that there was, to use a

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<sup>56</sup> Brewer (1997), p.496.

<sup>57</sup> Phillipson, (1975), pp.409, fn.3 & 446.

twentieth-century expression, a difference in lifestyle. A young Scot, returning to Edinburgh, from the Continent and London, wrote that he had to 'labour to tone myself down like an overstrained instrument to the low pitch of the rest about me'<sup>58</sup> Yet, not all reflections on the pace of life were alike, James Shaw, a visitor to the city, recorded that Edinburgh was 'an opulent & also a gay & festive city. Its gayest Season which is in the Winter commences soon after the new year & lasts for the space of three months. I have sometimes named this the Carnival of Edinburgh.'<sup>59</sup>

People remained in the provinces for reasons other than a sense of inferiority, or inability to compete in London.<sup>60</sup> For artists, better communications, the print trade, and organised and regular opportunities for public exhibition, had, by the later eighteenth century made it less essential to remain within the tight geographical area of St Martin's Lane, or even London. At the upper end of the market Thomas Gainsborough and William Hoare operated successfully out of Bath, and Joseph Wright from Derby.

Although it is problematic to interpret acknowledgements of the differences between provincial and metropolitan life, and its influence, as expressions of inferiority, it must also be acknowledged that there is undoubtedly evidence of emulation of the metropolis. As the originator, or chief importer of fashionable goods and ideas into Britain, London would have been the most important source from which these fashions for goods and ideas would have been spread. A familiar trope in literature of this period was the provincial travelling to London, as in *The Contemplative Man* by (probably) H. Lawrence (1771) or Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771). In both of these examples, although London culture might have been more high pitched

<sup>58</sup> Clive & Bailyn, pp.209-210, quotations cited are: fn. 22 David Hume to John Clephane, April 20, 1756 in Greig, I, 229; fn.24, George Dempster to Adam Fergusson, December 5, 1756 in James Fergusson (ed.), *Letters of George Dempster to Sir Adam Fergusson, 1756-1813*, London, 1934, p.15.

<sup>59</sup>NLS. Adv. MS. 16.2.15, ff.52-54, 'Journal of James Shaw 1795-96.' Shaw was visiting Dr Hugh Blair in Edinburgh, although born in Edinburgh Shaw lived elsewhere.



than the protagonists were used to, it certainly was neither alien nor unfamiliar. It was compatible with the cultural baggage they already carried, much as their actual baggage might have contained the latest fashions.<sup>61</sup>

Brewer has provided a summary corrective to this version of events.

Acknowledging that the emulation and imitation of London values were an indisputable part of provincial life, he distinguishes London's view of provincial life from that of the provincials' reflection on their own lives. He argues that from the London perspective, provincials were absorbed into metropolitan culture rather than agents acting upon it, but from the provincial perspective metropolitan culture was adapted in diverse ways contingent upon the particularity of their own provincial culture. Through the examples of three individuals, he argues that a provincial's aims and ambitions could be as large as any Londoner's, and that while all three used London's culture, none wanted to imitate it, and, moreover, that local pride, was not parochial.<sup>62</sup>

Brewer's argument that the provinces' ostensible conformity to the cultural values of London concealed a local culture that appeared more diverse and derivative, conforms to the model of local and national culture already argued by Borsay and Wahrman.<sup>63</sup> Provincial music making demonstrates most clearly the continued diversity and the importance of local culture, as well as the influence of London. A music festival was held annually in Bristol between 1757 and 1760 and the Assembly

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<sup>60</sup> Brewer (1997), p.497.

<sup>61</sup> *The Contemplative Man, or the History of Christopher Crab Esq. Of North Wales*, Vol.1, London, 1771, published anonymously but probably by H. Lawrence. Crab's visit - with his London born wife - to London is full of episodes that illustrate this point. For example, given a pot of porter rather than his familiar mug of ale, Crab mistakenly takes it as a draught. Familiar with the drink 'this is Certainly the Same sort of Stuff that *Trundle* used to give me to create an Appetite', he was nonetheless surprised at it being proffered it rather than ale (pp.215-6). At Vauxhall (p.241) his knowledge of agricultural markets again offers the opportunity for Crab to embarrass his family and friends. Shocked at the price of beef (1 shilling) for their supper, Crab remarks to the waiter 'You lie, - what do you think because I'm a Country Gentleman, that I don't know how the London Markets go better than all that comes to?' Tobias Smollett, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, first published 1771 in 3 Vols, various editions, this London, 1995.

<sup>62</sup> For provincial culture see Brewer (1997) Part VI, 'Province & Nation', pp.493-615.

Room was also referred to as the New Music Room. In Bath a band of musicians played close to the Baths from the seventeenth century, concerts were held from the early eighteenth century and a musical academy also existed by 1765.<sup>64</sup> Newcastle had a flourishing music scene of regular concerts, one off performances and an annual choral festival, the festival was based upon a similar event at the Foundling Hospital in London.<sup>65</sup> In addition traditional musical institutions continued to be successful in a number of towns. Town waits, in which the town's watchmen held antiquated duties of providing music for civic ceremonies from the medieval period, flourished in London, Norwich, Yarmouth, Bristol, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, York, Leicester, Bath and Sheffield.<sup>66</sup>

A case study by Brewer of John Marsh (1752-1828), who lived variously in Salisbury, Canterbury and Chichester, demonstrates the coincident importance of local and national culture to provincial life. Marsh was a gentleman, amateur musician and composer who enjoyed a national reputation. Deeply involved in the musical societies and subscription concert series in the provincial towns in which he lived, he also composed music which was played in prominent London churches - St Paul's Cathedral, St Martin-in-the Fields, St Margaret's Westminster and Westminster Abbey. His music was also popular in Drury Lane and Ranleigh Gardens, and every spring he attended the concerts of London's music season.<sup>67</sup>

In Edinburgh a weekly music concert was held. Creech reports that it began at six o'clock in 1763, but in 1783 at seven o'clock - he adds that by that date 'it was not in

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<sup>63</sup> Borsay (1989), p.496.

<sup>64</sup> Borsay (1989), pp.123,161& 332.

<sup>65</sup> Borsay, (1989), p.123.

<sup>66</sup> Borsay (1989), p.125.

<sup>67</sup> For John Marsh see Brewer (1997), pp.531-572. ' "The Harmony of heaven": John Marsh and Provincial Music'. William Jackson of Exeter was another highly successful composer who maintained close contact with London musical and literary life, although he was based for much of his life at Exeter Cathedral. *The*

general so much attended as such an elegant entertainment should have been, and which was given at the sole expense of the subscribers'. However, by the early 1790s 'The fashion changed, and the Concert became the most crowded place of amusement.'<sup>68</sup> The city's assemblies also altered over this period. In 1763 there was 'one dancing assembly room: the profits of which went to the support of the Charity-Workhouse; Minuets were danced by each set, previous to the country-dances. Strict regularity with respect to dress and decorum, and great dignity of manners were observed.' By 1783 great alterations had taken place, the old Assembly Room was abandoned by the dancers in favour of 'two new elegant' rooms (there was also another in Leith). The minuet was no longer danced and country-dances were few except those which were 'nearer a romp than elegant dancing'. Men's manners were less refined, 'many of them reeled from the tavern' and they took less care with their dresses. Further the charity-workhouse no longer benefited from these social gatherings. The balls began later and continued until three or four the next morning. But by the early 1790s public assemblies were little attended, the fashion turning to private balls.<sup>69</sup>

Although this discourse, of a decline in manners concomitant with material progress, is part of the spirit of the age, the detail of Creech's account provides an insight into the vitality of Edinburgh's society during the second half of the century.

Edinburgh's large and rapidly expanding population, and the large numbers of nobility

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*New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Stanley Sadie (ed.), London, 1980, comments that 'his provincial perspective expressed itself in a striking independence of thought', Vol.9, p.441.

<sup>68</sup> Creech is probably referring to St Cecilia's Hall situated in Niddry's Wynd in the Canongate, which sought out performers from both Britain and the Continent. For St Cecilia's Hall see David Fraser Harris, *Saint Cecilia's Hall in the Niddry Wynd*, Edinburgh and London, 1899. This book contains a number of first hand accounts of the concerts including that of Captain Topham an Englishman resident in Edinburgh between 1774 and 1775. Topham records 'One of the principal entertainments in Edinburgh is a concert which is supported by subscription, under the direction of a governor, treasurer, and five directors, who procure some of the best performers from other countries, and have a weekly concert in an elegant room which they have built for that purpose, and which is styled St Cecilia's Hall'(no page number).

and gentry who passed the winter season in the city, contributed to the importance of its season.<sup>70</sup> The events and fashions described by Creech would have undoubtedly found parallels in the many expanding urban centres of provincial England.

Theatres flourished in provincial towns. In Bath three were playing by 1750, Bristol's theatres included Jacob's Well (1706), Clifton (1729) and King Street (1764-6). Liverpool's earliest theatre Old Ropery competed with Drury Lane, which was renovated and reopened in 1759, and its Theatre Royal which opened in 1772. Newcastle and Manchester each had a theatre and in Norwich there were two theatres and various public houses were also regular venues of plays.<sup>71</sup> The names of these theatres often echoed their famous London cousins, to connect the provincial and London establishments in the minds of the audience and to suggest an equality. Edinburgh's theatrical season was advertised extensively, and details of forthcoming plays at the Theatre Royal were often found on the front page of the *Caledonian Mercury*. The Edinburgh stage attracted actors, including the famous Mrs Siddons, and managers from London.<sup>72</sup> The employment of London actors in provincial theatres was not uncommon, and the traffic of theatrical talent was not one way: *Douglas*, by the Edinburgh minister John Home, played first in Edinburgh before transferring to London and appearing in the repertory of English provincial theatres.

The theatre was extremely popular in Edinburgh, and according to Creech in 1783, the boxes for Saturday nights were generally taken for the season. However, for

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<sup>69</sup> Creech, pp.56-58. A similar view of the changing manners and entertainment in Edinburgh can be found in Philo Scotus [Philip Barrington Ainslie] *Reminiscences of a Scottish Gentleman, commencing in 1787*, London, 1861.

<sup>70</sup> Philo Scotus, p.146.

<sup>71</sup> Borsay (1989), pp.329-330.

<sup>72</sup> A history of Edinburgh's theatres is given in James C. Dibdin *The Annals of the Edinburgh Stage*, Edinburgh, 1888. Philo Scotus's contemporary account of the manners and customs of late eighteenth-century Edinburgh, p.147, records that the theatre was usually well attended, and that the manager was Stephen Kemble, the elder brother of John Kemble and Mrs Siddons. He also states that John Kemble and Mrs Siddons made annual visits to Edinburgh.

Creech the popularity of Saturday night was yet another demonstration of the decline in manners. This modern development is compared unfavourably with 1763, when 'By those who attended the Theatre, even without scruple, Saturday night was thought the most improper in the week for going to a play. Any clergyman, who had been known to have gone to the playhouse, would have incurred church censure.'<sup>73</sup>

Among the less formal venues for public recreation, but which were still important for the opportunity they allowed for private and social spectatorship, were public walks and commercial pleasure gardens.<sup>74</sup> Although the most famous were in London they were by no means confined to the metropolis, numerous Ranleigh and Vauxhall Gardens were found in provincial towns.<sup>75</sup> In Edinburgh the opening of Comely Gardens, located behind the palace of Holyrood, was advertised by an announcement in the Scots Magazine of May 1755 describing it as a new summer entertainment 'after the manner of Vaux-hall at London.' This clear case of emulation did make a concession to local requirements as the announcement stressed that 'large apartments allow shelter for all the company in inclement weather.'<sup>76</sup> Meanwhile, libraries, coffee houses, learned and social societies all flourished in the provinces. These places of sociable encounter ensured that provincial towns were lively intellectual centres, centres informed by the numerous contacts - intellectual, social, familial and economic - that tie people.

The social and commercial development of provincial towns underpinned the manifestation of their culture: in the theatre, promenades, clubs and societies, education, architecture and the numerous other ways discussed above. Visual culture, another major aspect of provincial life, has, in the main, been neglected. Yet, it was a vital part

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<sup>73</sup> Creech, pp.56-7.

<sup>74</sup> For a general discussion of the social mores of the pleasure garden see Brewer (1997) esp. pp.64-68.

<sup>75</sup> Another example is Ranleigh Gardens in Bath.

of the social and commercial life of these towns. Drawing masters formed part of the educational establishment of the aspirational middle class, prints were published and distributed mainly through the book trade, and the theatre required scene painters to bring imaginative and real locations to life.

Provincial art (as the work of Joseph Wright exceptionally testifies), of the kind an artist might hope to have displayed at one of the new London exhibitions, was not confined to portraits of merchants and civic dignitaries. There is evidence that landscape painting, which served a decorative domestic role, was not an insignificant part of some provincial artists' *oeuvre*, although landscape painting was a genre complicated by its making manifest real problems of art historical boundaries, of status and of purpose; the distinction between house painter and fine artist being often problematic.<sup>77</sup> It is a point that may be exemplified by the decorative painting (destroyed) carried out at Penicuik House near Edinburgh.

A major historical scheme that depicted scenes from the poems of Ossian, it was executed by Alexander Runciman.<sup>78</sup> However, the accounts for this work also include monies paid to a painter, Dugald Maclaurie, in June 1772. The work he carried out included gilding and the decoration of mouldings and frames, work associated with the artisan house painter. But Maclaurie also undertook much more painterly duties for which he was given additional and specified payment: five pounds for painting bagpipes, stock and horns, and for painting the foliage and 'all enrichings' sixteen pounds, these

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<sup>76</sup> *Scots Magazine*, May 1755, pp.267-8.

<sup>77</sup> Although the decorative scheme at Penicuik does not survive, Macmillan (1990), p.123, asserts that Runciman painted in oil directly on to white primed plaster.

<sup>78</sup> This work transformed the drawing room of a minor member of the Scottish aristocracy into a homage to an acquired ancient Scottish history and culture, imbuing house, patron and artist with the authority of large-scale history painting. For Ossian's Hall at Penicuik see Macmillan (1973), pp.227-250, and (1990), pp.122-124. Syllas Neville visited Penicuik House during his visit to Edinburgh in the 1770s.

Unfortunately he gives the reader little impression of their appearance and impact, instead he directs the reader to a pamphlet printed for Crouch in 1773 in which the works were described together with the text

latter works most probably forming part of the background to Runciman's work.<sup>79</sup>

Maclaurie was apprentice to, and partner of Alexander Runciman. When Runciman went to Italy with his brother (supported by Sir John Clerk), Maclaurie (or MacLaurin) was left to care for their painting business.<sup>80</sup> The breadth of his employment duties should therefore not be seen as indicative of any particular status, but rather exemplifies the problems of imposing generalist hierarchies and demarcations upon eighteenth-century provincial artists whose occupations were broad-ranging and varied.

Twentieth-century notions of demarcation are obviously problematic in addressing the eighteenth century. It was not only that status was less clear-cut, as a result of professional boundaries being less rigid, but that quite simply it was often financially necessary to be proficient at more than one trade or occupation. This was not a situation confined to artists but can be found generally where there was a limited market for a service or product. These multiple occupations were not necessarily closely related. James Boswell visiting St. Andrews in 1773 observed one such case that he regarded as worthy of note - 'we observed two occupations united in the same person who had hung out two signposts. Upon one was "James Hood, White Iron Smith"...upon another "The Art of Fencing, Taught by James Hood."'<sup>81</sup>

The cases of James Bunn and John Sanders who worked in Norwich during the 1770s, exemplify the multiple opportunities and occupations an artist could pursue in the provinces, undoubtedly born of the necessity to balance specialist services and levels of consumption. Bunn began his career as an actor and scene painter at the Theatre Royal

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of Ossian. He does, however, say of Runciman, he was 'a young painter at Edinburgh, and one much esteemed!' Basil Cozens-Hardy (ed.), *The Diary of Sylls Neville 1767-1788*, London, 1950, p.205.

<sup>79</sup> Macmillan (1973), pp.217-8.

<sup>80</sup> Macmillan (1973), pp.217-8 refers to Maclaurie, but a front page announcement in the *Caledonian Mercury* on Wednesday 11th February 1767 refers to him as McLaurin.

<sup>81</sup> Quoted in Nenadic (1988) p.114, quoting from James Boswell *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, London 1785, no edition or page numbers specified. Nenadic also argues that

in Norwich. In 1773 he gave up his acting career to establish himself as an engraver, and the following year opened a drawing school. By 1776 Bunn could describe himself as a coach and sign painter, an engraver, and a drawing master. He copied paintings and drawings, framed and glazed pictures, and could colour and ornament rooms - all in addition to his continued work as a scene painter.<sup>82</sup> He further expanded both his artistic and commercial interests when, that same year, he became keeper of the city's pleasure gardens, for which he provided the additional attractions of transparencies and paintings. Despite, or perhaps even as a result of, his prodigiousness, Bunn was not the only artist in Norwich engaged in these occupations, and even employed another artist, John Sanders (jnr.), to provide additional transparencies for the gardens. Sanders advertised himself primarily as a portrait painter in oils and crayons, but he too was employed by the Norwich theatre as a scene painter, and would also clean and repair paintings.<sup>83</sup>

The examples of Bunn and Sanders reinforce the hypothesis that it was extremely difficult for provincial artists in even large provincial towns, to pursue exclusive and specialist roles. However, the following, more detailed, comparison of provincial art markets will consider this question with recourse to many more examples. While the givens of provincial art history - that there were very few artists resident in provincial towns and that by necessity, these were generalists - will receive further support, our understanding of specific provincial circumstances will become more sophisticated.

We are indebted to Duncan Forbes for much of our understanding of the Edinburgh art market, c1775-1820. Although his interest is mainly with the more institutionalised and formalised arena of the nineteenth-century city, he does supply an

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multiple occupations were not confined to those of modest means, wealthy men in large towns could derive investment income from a variety of sources.

<sup>82</sup> Trevor Fawcett 'Eighteenth-Century Art in Norwich' *Walpole Society*, 1976-78, Vol.XLVI, pp.71-90, p.80.

<sup>83</sup> Fawcett (1976-78), p.81.



analysis of the eighteenth-century art market in Edinburgh based upon evidence found in Trades Directories and advertisements placed in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*.<sup>84</sup>

Forbes uses his eighteenth-century sources to understand and contextualise the institutionalisation of art in Edinburgh during the nineteenth century, the comparable sources utilised here will rather both suggest a context for the private patronage of Allan Ramsay in Scotland and, more fundamentally, will provide an assessment of Edinburgh's relative position as a centre for artistic production and consumption within Britain.

Forbes's use of trade directories is, as he admits, highly problematic in an artistic context, as they were not comprehensive and for numerous reasons artists do not appear.<sup>85</sup> A simple comparison of numbers of artists working in Edinburgh in the years 1780-81 demonstrates the fallibility of the directories for establishing a comprehensive account of Edinburgh's artistic community. The 1780-81 directory finds only two artists (as opposed to 27 painters) in Edinburgh, whilst at this time Alexander Runciman, John Brown (1781 only), David Allan, William Millar, James Cumming, David Martin and Alexander Nasmyth were resident in Edinburgh and practising artists.<sup>86</sup> While the use of newspaper advertisements is admittedly problematic in establishing a comprehensive list of artists operating in a city, they do provide a strong impression of the commercial development of art.

The commercial or popular face of the art market will be considered in Part II, but first the competition between, and market for, fine artists will be addressed. This research has consulted established secondary literature and used the results of a survey of

<sup>84</sup> Duncan Forbes, 'Artists, Patrons and the Power of Association: The Emergence of a Bourgeois Artistic Field in Edinburgh c1775-c1840.' Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of St Andrews, 1996.

<sup>85</sup> Forbes, p.58, fn.156. Correspondence between Lord Buchan and the drawing master George Walker reveals that in 1806 there were thirty drawing instructors in Edinburgh. As Forbes acknowledges in fn.156, if this estimate is accurate it demonstrates the unreliability of trade directories as fine art sources, as the 1805-06 directory lists only four drawing teachers.

<sup>86</sup> Trades Directory information is taken from Forbes, fig.2.1 'Artists and Businesses related to the Visual Arts in Edinburgh, 1773-1840', p.28.

newspaper advertisements in the *Caledonian Mercury* in order to provide as comprehensive and accurate a representation of fine artists and their specialities in Edinburgh during the period 1750-1800 as possible, although inevitably it remains open to additions.<sup>87</sup>

Table 1 *Fine Artists in Edinburgh 1750-1800* (Appendix A) demonstrates that the numbers of artists present and working in Edinburgh during the period 1750-1800 tended to increase. Assuming that the number of artists is a reflection of market potential, it is also evident that the market for art in the city was generally improving over this period.<sup>88</sup> However, this analysis also reveals that this was far from a simple linear increase, showing rather that artists in general came and went with regularity, so that, with a few well-documented exceptions, the artistic establishment in Edinburgh was fluid, vibrant and open to change.

During the early 1750s six or seven artists were resident, although this number declined in the second half of the decade to four or five. In 1760 the number rose again to seven, remaining constant until 1766 when it rose to eight, before dropping to five a year later. Numbers remained low and stable for the next few years before the numbers increased steadily from 1770 until 1774; there was yet another down-turn between 1775 and 1780. After 1781 there is a definite rise in numbers until almost the end of the

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<sup>87</sup> I have compiled the lists of artists working in Edinburgh, with as accurate indications of the years they spent in the city and their occupations as is possible from the following sources. Irwin remains the most comprehensive and reliable biographical source for Scottish artists. The other sources consulted were: Macmillan 1986 and 1990; Holloway & Errington (1978); Holloway (1989); Caw; Thomson (1997); Waterhouse (1953, 1994), and *British 18<sup>th</sup> Century Painters* (1981); John Ingamells *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers to Italy 1701-1800*, London, 1997; Mildred Archer, *India and British Portraiture*, London, 1977; Smart (London, 1992); *David Martin (1737-1797)*, EC, St Andrews, 1997; Jane Turner (ed.), *The Dictionary of Art*, London, 1996; Thieme-Becker *Allgemeins Lexicon der bilden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, 37 vols., 1907-1950; Algernon Graves *A Dictionary of Artists who have exhibited works in the principal London Exhibitions from 1760-1893*, Bath, 1969; *Compliments to Painters of Eminence, Natives of Scotland; with a critical dissertation on the works of the present professors of that charming art in this city. Subjects recommended, advice given, and hints to painters of history, landscape, and portrait; with a plan for their future information*, Edinburgh, 1797.

century; the numbers of artists never less than seven. A peak was reached in the 1790s, when there were consistently nine or ten artists resident, reaching a maximum of twelve in 1797 before declining significantly.<sup>89</sup> This general rise in artistic activity until 1797, and its subsequent decline, was also, it will be demonstrated, evident in the popular art market. This is particularly clear in the business of the print auctioneer, William Martin. Martin advertised fourteen auctions of prints in 1797, but only one just a year later, and by 1800 his sale room was available to let, although he did not retire until 1807 or 1808.<sup>90</sup> It is probable that this dramatic decline in commercial sales and the significant decline in the presence of fine artists in the city reflects a broad depressing of the art and luxury goods market coincident with the Napoleonic Wars.

These figures bear interesting comparison with other British provincial towns and cities. Norwich is comparable with Edinburgh in terms of its status as a county town and the large hinterland over which it influenced its population. Its population was only approximately half that of Edinburgh in the later eighteenth century and it accordingly supported far fewer fine artists during this period.<sup>91</sup> During the 1750s, 1760s and 1770s there were generally only one or two fine artists permanently resident in the town, and during the later 1770s there were no resident portrait painters and patrons were reliant upon itinerant artists for likenesses.<sup>92</sup> In contrast, Liverpool's market for the fine arts

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<sup>88</sup> This assumption is based upon the economic argument that if artist were not able to make a living they would move on. It does not assume that all artists were as successful as each other.

<sup>89</sup> The number of artists present in 1797 may be more reflective of the late 1790s in general, as the evidence for this particular year benefits from the existence of a pamphlet *Compliments to Painters of Eminence, Natives of Scotland*. This has provided the first evidence of the presence of a number of artists who were not previously confirmed as having practised in Edinburgh, or were not known at this early date- Robert Freebairn, Anthony Stewart, Hugh William Williams and Cummins [a sculptor]. Duncan Forbes's research into trades directories finds thirteen artists present between 1799 - 1800 which would seem to confirm this assumption. Forbes, figure 2.1, p.28.

<sup>90</sup> Martin's sales and newspaper advertisements are discussed in part II.

<sup>91</sup> In 1752 Norwich's population was 36,196; in 1786 40,051. This compares with Edinburgh's population of 57,000 in 1755 and 70,000 in 1775. The figures for Norwich are taken from C.W. Chalklin, *The Provincial Towns of Georgian England A Study of Building Process, 1740-1820*, London, 1974 p.33. For the Edinburgh figures see above.

<sup>92</sup> Fawcett (1976-1978), *passim*.

was, contemporaneously, developing as strongly as its population.<sup>93</sup> There was very little artistic activity during the 1750s and first half of the 1760s; only one or two artists are recorded, their names known through parish registers rather than through their work.<sup>94</sup> It is difficult to establish whether they may even be described as fine artists, and their presence in Liverpool could well be connected with the pottery industry. However, locally born George Stubbs did make two short visits to Liverpool in the 1750s, and by the early 1770s and throughout the 1780s interest in the arts was sufficiently strong to motivate the establishment of successive art academies. The first, established in 1769, a year after the Royal Academy in London, had five members who have been established as artists, the others being interested amateurs and craftsmen.<sup>95</sup> In addition to the five artists, members of the Liverpool Academy in the late 1760s and early 1770s, Joseph Wright of Derby was based in Liverpool between 1768 and 1771, giving a figure of at least six artists in the town in the year 1769.<sup>96</sup>

There is evidence of at least nine artists working in Liverpool during the 1770s. Thomas Chubbard, P.P. Burdett, Richard Caddick and William Caddick appear to have been permanently resident throughout the later 1760s, the 1770s and 1780s. In addition Wright was present at the start of the 1770s and William Tate stayed between 1774 and 1776. John Formby, William Jackson and James Sharples, were recorded as

<sup>93</sup> For Liverpool see above and Chalklin, p.24.

<sup>94</sup> E. Rimbault Dibdin, 'Liverpool Art and Artists in the Eighteenth Century, *The Walpole Society*, 1917-1918, Vol. VI, pp.12-91, p.60. Thomas Rothwell, an enamel painter is recorded in 1761, and the engravers Jeremiah Evans and William Sutton are recorded in 1760 and 1763 respectively. Richard Wright (1735-1775) was born in Liverpool and was known as 'Wright of Liverpool'. He exhibited at the Society of Artists in 1762 from a London address, and also at the Free Society, however, it is probable that he was painting in Liverpool before this date. C.P. Darcy *The Encouragement of the Fine Arts in Lancashire 1760-1860*, Manchester, 1976, is also concerned with Liverpool, however, it does not provide any further evidence of artists in Liverpool in the 1750s and 1760s.

<sup>95</sup> Dibdin, pp.65-72, lists twenty-two members of the Liverpool Academy, the other fifteen were gentlemen with an amateur interest in the fine arts. Craftsmen involved in associated areas, in particular watchmakers and a number of members who have been identified by name only.

<sup>96</sup> This first Liverpool Academy may not have included all of Liverpool's artists and so this information does not qualify as a comprehensive assessment of artists' numbers. Wright was also convenient to Liverpool patrons outside of this period, in Derby.

exhibitors at the 1774 Liverpool exhibition.<sup>97</sup> These figures would seem to indicate that as in Edinburgh Liverpool during the 1770s supplied an economy most capable of giving artists a livelihood.

There is no evidence of how long these latter exhibitors had, or continued to reside in Liverpool. However, the consistent presence of Thomas Chubbard, William Caddick and his sons Richard and William (jnr.), and the re-appearance of William Tate in 1783-4 suggests the possibility of a continued and steady market for fine art.<sup>98</sup> In addition, Patrick John McMorland was resident from circa 1781 until the 1790s, John Williamson from circa 1783 to 1818, and Thomas Hazelhurst and Henry Pickering were also practising during the 1780s.<sup>99</sup> The portrait painter, Faithful Christopher Pack, is known to have spent some time in Liverpool (after Norwich and London and before going to Dublin) between the dates 1781 and 1786.<sup>100</sup> Though disparate and inconclusive, this evidence indicates that during the 1780s there were at least seven artists resident in Liverpool coincidentally. These figures would seem to find some correspondence with the situation in Edinburgh at this time, thus emphasising the relative increase in artistic numbers in Liverpool over the period considered. However, the correspondence between the numbers of fine artists working in Liverpool and Edinburgh indicates only that similar levels of demand were able to sustain similar numbers of artists. It does not indicate the nature of that demand: an important question to be considered below.

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<sup>97</sup> For artists practising in Liverpool in the 1770s see Dibdin pp.65-75. A complete list of exhibitors may also be found in E. Morris & E. Roberts, *The Liverpool Academy and other Exhibitions of Contemporary Art in Liverpool 1774 - 1867*, Liverpool, 1998.

<sup>98</sup> The only definitive record of William Caddick (jnr.) in Liverpool is in 1780 when he sent a picture to the Royal Academy. Dibdin, p.70, speculates that he died young.

<sup>99</sup> Dibdin, pp.77, 79, 87 & 89 respectively.

<sup>100</sup> Dibdin, p.79.

The continued interest in the fine arts in Liverpool, demonstrated by the desire to establish an academy, if not the ability to maintain one may reflect the presence of a relatively strong artistic community as well as interested amateurs.<sup>101</sup> The dates of the various art institutions, *The Liverpool Academy* (1769-1770), *The Society of Artists in Liverpool*, (c1773-c1775), and the *Society for Promoting Painting and Design in Liverpool* (active 1783 to after 1787), may reflect periods of pronounced artistic activity within the town.<sup>102</sup>

In the 1750s Manchester's population was similar to that of Liverpool, and also enjoyed a substantial growth in trade later in the century. The level of artistic activity in Manchester, over time, has been little researched although some evidence for the late 1760s exists. The artist Peter Romney, wrote of Manchester in 1767 'There is one Pickering, who lives altogether in this town, a face painter, and a second, Cranke, but who neither draws nor colours so well.'<sup>103</sup> In the smaller towns of northern England, for example Whitehaven, Cockermouth, and Hull, there appears to be little evidence of a body of artists resident coincidentally. What evidence there is suggests that itinerant and distinguished artists who visited provincial towns would have served the needs of smaller communities, as well as adding to the competition present in the larger centres of, for example, Liverpool and Edinburgh.<sup>104</sup>

As we have seen, Allan Ramsay made annual visits to Edinburgh in the early 1750s, and between late 1753 and the summer of 1754 he spent eight or nine months in the city and painted at least thirty-seven portraits.<sup>105</sup> Philip Mercier was in Edinburgh in 1750 on a brief visit from his base in York, from where he also visited Ireland, and

<sup>101</sup> For Liverpool exhibitions see Morris and Roberts, *passim*.

<sup>102</sup> The names and dates of the various academies and societies are given in Dibdin, pp.80-89.

<sup>103</sup> Quoted in Darcy, p.65.

<sup>104</sup> I define visiting artists as those who take up residence in a town for one or two years - or who return again and again to the same location, and probably have some personal connection with it.

Henri-Pierre Danloux (1753-1809), a French portrait painter, was resident in Edinburgh between 1796 and 1798.<sup>106</sup> Danloux painted the French king then in exile at the Palace of Holyrood, and several prominent members of the Scottish aristocracy – *The Family of Henry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Buccleuch* and *Lady Jane Dalrymple Hamilton as Britannia*.<sup>107</sup> This latter portrait celebrates Admiral Archibald Duncan of Camperdown's victory over the Dutch navy in 1797, and is a patriotic expression of pride in a British victory, and therefore an expression of British identity.<sup>108</sup> The patriotic subject of Duncan's victory appears to have been popular in Scotland. In a full length portrait of 1798, Danloux portrayed Duncan at the moment of victory aboard his ship (Fig. 78), and a proposal to publish by subscription an engraving after a full-length portrait by Raeburn was advertised in the *Caledonian Mercury* in April 1798, further a panorama of the battle was shown in Edinburgh in 1800.<sup>109</sup> These artists not only met a demand for portraiture in Edinburgh, and Scotland more generally, but their presence would inevitably have been influential in the formation of taste and desire amongst patrons and artists, particularly given the status of Ramsay and Danloux. As we saw above, Allan Ramsay's influence on portrait painting in Edinburgh was fundamental.

In assessing the numbers of artists in Edinburgh, it is unclear in a number of cases whether an artist was simply passing through for the season, or whether they intended to establish themselves in the city, for neither duration nor motivation were specified. The presence of the landscape painter Robert Freebairn (1764-1808) in Edinburgh in 1797 is

<sup>105</sup> See chapter four.

<sup>106</sup> Danloux fled to London in January 1791 to escape the Revolution. Danloux may have been in Edinburgh for longer, or may have returned to it intermittently after this date as Mrs Danloux was working in the city in 1800. An advertisement in the *Caledonian Mercury* of 3/5/00 states that prints of *Lord Duncan* and of *Britannia* (probably *Lady Jane Dalrymple as Britannia*, see below), by Mr Danloux, had arrived from London. They were available from Mrs Danloux at the French academy in Leith Terrace, Edinburgh.

<sup>107</sup> *The Family of Henry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Buccleuch* (1798, 49 x 39½in., oil on canvas, Buccleuch collection, Bowhill) and *Lady Jane Dalrymple Hamilton as Britannia* (c1797, oil on canvas, private collection)

<sup>108</sup> The Panorama of Archibald Duncan's (of Camperdown) victory over the Dutch fleet was shown in Edinburgh in 1800, it is discussed in part II.

evidenced only in an under-utilised pamphlet of that same year, *Compliments to Painters of Eminence, Natives of Scotland; with a critical dissertation on the works of the present professors of that charming art in this city*. Published anonymously in Edinburgh, it also confirms the presence of ten other painters, and one sculptor and contains an ode to the talent of the late David Allan.<sup>110</sup> The presence of Freebairn in Edinburgh is not recorded elsewhere, although he was apparently of Scottish descent and articted to Philip Reinagle; his example underscores yet again the difficulties in achieving a comprehensive record of artists resident in a town.<sup>111</sup> The reliability of this pamphlet and the knowledge of its writer are confirmed by its description of Archibald Skirving:

And SKIRVIN, faith, my lad, you paint with taste;  
Some say, indeed, your time you often waste:  
Tell them, my lad, to rashness you're a foe;  
They that paint fast may stumble, you go slow;  
And that it is right picture, - say it took a year,  
Painted with judgement, and conception clear,  
Is worth a thousand pictures done in haste,  
Which, tho' so quickly, are not done with taste.  
I would not wish that lads to praise my rhyme  
Would merely say it took me little time;  
But wish they'd say, I do not praises fear,  
Such clever verse might take up half a year:  
A half, Lord ! nonsense, take a year and more,  
Ye would not wonder if it took a score.<sup>112</sup>

A more detailed description of Skirving's practice outlined by the anonymous pamphlet writer can be found in the artist's obituary notice. The artist Patrick Gibson, writing in

<sup>109</sup> *Caledonian Mercury*, 5/4/1798.

<sup>110</sup> *Compliments to Painters of Eminence, Natives of Scotland*. The artists discussed are Anthony Stewart, Henry Raeburn, [George] Watson, Mr Graham, [Robert] Freebairn, David Allan (deceased), George Walker (jnr.), Cummins (a sculptor), Archibald Skirving, [Hugh William] Williams and Alexander Nasmyth.

<sup>111</sup> According to Waterhouse (1981), Robert Freebairn was born and died in London. He entered the RA schools in 1782 and some time after 1787 went to Italy. He exhibited at the RA 1782-1807 from London addresses. Although Waterhouse records no visits to Scotland, Freebairn had considerable Scottish connections. He was apprenticed to Philip Reinagle (1782-85), who was both Ramsay's assistant and a native of Edinburgh, and whilst in Italy he studied under Jacob More. See also the *DNB* and Ingamells (1997).

<sup>112</sup> *Compliments to Painters of Eminence, Natives of Scotland*, pp.36-37.



1819, claimed that later in life Skirving refused to execute more than one portrait a year for which he charged one hundred guineas.<sup>113</sup>

The duration of Freebairn's stay in Edinburgh is not evident from this pamphlet, and as has already been stated is unknown in any other source. He may therefore have been visiting for the season, have made periodic regular visits, or been a more itinerant artist than is currently realised. In Edinburgh at least, there is evidence that there was a tendency (or possibility) for artists to exploit for a small number of seasons their value as new or novel, before moving on to another town and further novelty. For example, James Nixon (c1741/2-1812) a portraitist and painter in miniature was resident in Edinburgh between 1795 to 1798, and the duration of stay and his profession make him fairly representative of an increasing number of artists in Edinburgh at this time. It is possible that Freebairn also followed this practice, and almost certainly the still life painter Charles Lewis (1753-1794) can also be categorised in the same way; he lived at various times in London, Birmingham, Dublin and Edinburgh.<sup>114</sup>

In Liverpool there is scant evidence within secondary literature of itinerant artists, although, the exploitation of novelty for a short number of seasons is again evident. Joseph Wright of Derby's presence in Liverpool (between 1768 and 1771) evidently had a powerful effect upon the patronage of other portrait painters. The artist Peter Romney, in Liverpool in 1769 wrote in November of that year, that he had a dozen paintings in hand but 'what further encouragement I shall meet with I cannot judge. Mr. Wright, a famous painter from Derby, is here, who swallows up the business. He is indeed a true copier of nature; he is of a studious disposition, has a fine taste, and is, in short, qualified

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<sup>113</sup> Irwin, p.80. For Skirving see Stephen Lloyd, *Raeburn's rival Archibald Skirving 1749-1819*, EC, SNPG, 1999.

<sup>114</sup> For Lewis see Waterhouse (1981).

for a portrait painter of the first class; but he seems to want a certain force of feeling, and strength of conception in history painting.<sup>115</sup>

Wright's impact, although unusual, is perhaps comparable with that probably made by Ramsay on the Edinburgh portrait trade: Ramsay's ability to attract at least thirty-seven sitters in nine months may possibly have had a serious effect upon the city's resident portrait painters, William Mosman and John Alexander.<sup>116</sup> Even though both Ramsay and Wright brought with them a name and international reputation, the importance of friendship and social contacts cannot be underestimated in the gaining of patronage. As has been discussed, Ramsay was a founding member of the highly influential Edinburgh Select Society, and in obtaining the patronage of London based Scots and the Scottish aristocracy he benefited from the influence of his patron Lord Bute.<sup>117</sup> Although Wright's personal contacts are less elevated than Ramsay's, they were of equal significance to the younger artist. Wright boarded with the merchant Richard Tate, whom he had known in Derby and through whom he secured commissions from other leading families, painting at least twenty-eight portraits of Liverpool sitters in his time there.<sup>118</sup> Tate was not only a patron of the arts, but also an amateur artist and founder member of the Liverpool Academy where he exhibited in 1774 and 1784.<sup>119</sup>

The portrait painter William Tate (Richard Tate's son) was resident in Liverpool for prolonged periods throughout the 1770s and 1780s, sending works for exhibition to London as well as the Liverpool exhibitions. Between 1774 and 1776, and again in 1783 and 1784 he was in Liverpool, in 1773 and 1787 he is recorded as resident in Manchester. He is also spent periods practising in London and Bath where he died in

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<sup>115</sup> Quoted in Nicolson, Vol. I, p.4, and Darcy p.23.

<sup>116</sup> See chapter four.

<sup>117</sup> See chapter four.

<sup>118</sup> Darcy, p.23.

<sup>119</sup> Dibdin, p.68.

1806.<sup>120</sup> Faithful Christopher Pack moved between large centres of artistic patronage, residing variously in his native Norwich, Liverpool, London, Dublin and Bath.<sup>121</sup> With respect to visiting artists, Liverpool again appears to be comparable with Edinburgh, with such figures adding to an already reasonably competitive market, but without any apparent intention to remain for more than a few years. From this evidence it appears possible that there was an established circuit for artists through the major provincial centres of Dublin, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Norwich and Bath.

Norwich, in contrast, does have a demonstrably different profile as an artistic community. What was noteworthy about Norwich's position was the relative paucity of portrait painters who were resident in the city during the 1770s, when portraiture was the most lucrative branch of the arts, and the number of painters who came to the city from the Continent. The city's strong trading links with the Low Countries is undoubtedly an important factor in this situation. Edinburgh had similarly close trading links, the influence of which on her art market is discussed below.<sup>122</sup>

In Norwich, between the departure of William Williams in 1770 to work as a scene painter in the north of England and 1777, there were, according to Trevor Fawcett, no 'high quality' resident portrait painters, although this qualitative assessment could potentially exclude any number of artists.<sup>123</sup> Visiting portrait painters included William Grimaldi (1751-1830), a painter of miniatures in 1770, [Joseph] Wright (1756-1793) in

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<sup>120</sup> Dibdin, p.68.

<sup>121</sup> Dibdin, p.79.

<sup>122</sup> Fawcett (1976-1978), p.79.

<sup>123</sup> Fawcett (1976-1978), pp.78-79. Fawcett's summary of the state of portraiture in Norwich in the 1770s relies upon a value judgement. It is my intention to examine the market in general, rather than to make such value-laden definitions. It would appear from the number of itinerant artists, and those making short trips from London to the county, that the resident portrait painters were so few, or so unappealing, that a large market for outside artists developed. However, this does not explain why no portrait painter took up residence in the town at this time.

1774 and Jeremiah Meyer, a painter of miniatures, oil and crayon portraits, in 1775.<sup>124</sup> T. Royall or Ryall, produced portraits in coloured wax, mock ivory and oil miniature in 1776 and 1778. Francis Vandermyn, who came from the Continent, painted portraits in November 1777, J. Dobson and J. Dunthorne were present in 1779, and Philip Reinagle visited in 1780. Finally the East Anglian painter Henry Walton and Andreas van Rymdsdyck were painting portraits in the immediate area in 1781.<sup>125</sup>

In the period 1770-1777 at least five portrait painters visited Norwich and advertised their presence in the local press, and various drawing masters and specialists in ornamental arts passed through the town also advertising their skills. Even after Norwich had acquired the multi-talented John Sanders, whose many abilities included portraiture, the numbers of visiting artists showed no signs of contracting. However, Sanders had moved to London by 1781 and Norwich was once again left to visiting artists.<sup>126</sup>

William Beechey was invited to Norwich c1782, and his obvious success in gaining patronage for a number of expensive full-length and three-quarter length portraits signifies that, as was the case with Ramsay in Edinburgh, high quality portraitists could obtain patronage in the provinces. Eight of the nine works Beechey displayed at the Royal Academy in 1785 were of Norwich or Yarmouth clients and in that same year, whilst resident in Norwich, he was invited to paint a civic portrait of Robert Partridge. As Trevor Fawcett points out, this evidence would seem to imply that Beechey was able to tap an under-exploited market.<sup>127</sup> If Beechey was able to gain such

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<sup>124</sup> Wright can probably be identified with Joseph Wright (1756-1793), an American born artist who studied under Benjamin West in London, and who is known to have worked in Norwich in 1773/4. Brian Stewart and Mervyn Cutten *The Dictionary of Portrait Painters in Britain up to 1920*, Suffolk, 1997.

<sup>125</sup> This information is taken from Fawcett (1976-78), p.79.

<sup>126</sup> Fawcett (1976-78), p.82.

<sup>127</sup> Fawcett (1976-78), p.83.

lucrative patronage, and if significant numbers of visiting artists were attracted to the town, it remains open to question why the city did not support a resident portrait painter.

As visiting and itinerant artists would have spent only a limited time in each town or city, it is unlikely that they would have adapted their work to local tastes to any significant extent. It is more probable that they utilised a style or aesthetic expression that appealed across local boundaries, and was therefore national. It may therefore be argued that they played an important role in spreading the influence of both London and regional preferences, fashions and taste across the nation, creating a national arena for the exchange of artistic ideas. In addition, it is well known that innumerable artists spent time in London, either whilst training with an established artist or at the Royal Academy schools, or simply on visits during which they might enjoy excursions to artists' studios, private collections, or exhibitions. Some would return to their provincial roots, while others would try their luck in the capital. It also seems apparent that London-based artists were tempted to return to the provinces if a potentially profitable gap in the market opened up, or indeed simply on retirement. From the evidence of such movement it is not difficult to demonstrate how ideas might spread along various networks of personal connections as society, increasingly mobile (both physically and socially), encountered and transmitted new or different ideas across the country.

Many artists who were resident in, or who visited Edinburgh, had spent time in London. With regard to artists who practised in Edinburgh, Allan Ramsay was based in London, and his one time assistant, David Martin, returned to Edinburgh to set up in the portrait business in 1776. The last seven years of George Chalmers's life were spent in London, and William Mosman possibly spent time with William Aikman in London. Anne Forbes, on her return from training in Italy, struggled to establish herself in the

metropolis and returned to Scotland to practice. John Thomas Seton, who trained under Francis Hayman, enjoyed a profitable career in India and eventually retired to Edinburgh. William Millar visited Ramsay in London in 1759 and Charles Pavillon, a drawing master at the Trustees' Academy was brought to Edinburgh, from London, on the recommendation of Allan Ramsay.

For provincial artists making visits or prolonged stays in London, the importance of local patrons was paramount. Lord Bute's patronage of Allan Ramsay is an important example, but numerous others abound. David Martin painted several portraits of William Murray, Lord Mansfield, including a full-length portrait to hang in the latter's Adam-designed library at Kenwood House. While Martin's skill as a copyist and drapery painter is evident in this portrait, the face is not executed with the skill of an artist of the top rank, belying the status of the sitter, whose financial situation would undoubtedly have run to a sitting to Reynolds.<sup>128</sup>

Connections, both familial and local, played a vital role in artists' careers. This influence can be demonstrated through the example of Captain John Gilpin, who on retirement from a military career, taught drawing in Carlisle. He was a popular tutor and at any one time had up to half a dozen students, a number of whom became prominent artists. They included his two sons William and Sawrey Gilpin, Robert Smirke, and John 'Warwick' Smith. Not only was 'Warwick' Smith a student of Gilpin, but his father was an employee of a member of Captain Gilpin's family. Further, after various apprenticeships and drawing teachers in Cumbria, Smith was apprenticed to Sawrey Gilpin in London. Sawrey had been a pupil of the marine painter Samuel Scott, and was fortunate in receiving the support of the Duke of Cumberland, who provided a studio in

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<sup>128</sup>The original of this painting is now in Scone Palace. Martin's relationship with Murray began with a portrait painted in 1765, between 1770 and 1777 Martin worked constantly on portraits of Murray. Dixon,

Windsor Park. It was undoubtedly through his father that Sawrey secured the Duke's valuable patronage, as the Captain had served under the Duke during the Forty-Five.<sup>129</sup>

The network of artists and patronage, which stemmed from Captain Gilpin, demonstrates the manner in which an individual could have long-standing and widespread influence in the provinces.

For Scots the importance of local connections in London became the object of English derision and annoyance, and many prints were produced which highlighted purported nepotism. The accusation of Scots preferment was particularly strong in connection with Lord Bute, and was one of the causes of Bute's extreme unpopularity during the 1760s.<sup>130</sup> These accusations of 'Scotch' preferment extended beyond politics and into the arts. A pamphlet published in London in 1763, *Le Montagnard Parvenu, or the new Highland Adventurer in England, His Accidental Rise from Obscurity; His glaring Progress to Power: the Ways and Means*, railed against the promotion of two prominent Scots; the minister and playwright John Home, and his play *Douglas*, and the painter Allan Ramsay, who was made portrait painter to George III in preference to Reynolds. The anonymous pamphleteer wrote of Bute's patronage of Home, 'to assist in so uncommon a manner at the repeated representations of dull tragedies, written by a bard uninspired by Phoebus, by the tragic, or any other muse, and whose dramas are as frigid as the climate from which he came.' He continued, 'it was not unpleasant to hear some of his countrymen, at the representation of *Douglas*, boisterously and injudiciously roar out their uncouth applause, "this is bra', but-i-ful, de-vene," then say to each other,

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p.11. Many of Martin's male portraits share distinctive facial features and shape, which can be seen in his portraits of Mansfield.

<sup>129</sup> For the local influence of the Gilpin family see *Cumberland Artists, 1700-1900*, EC, Carlisle City Art Gallery, 1971, pp.5-10.

<sup>130</sup> For a discussion of Bute's unpopularity, its objects, forms and causes see Brewer (1973), pp.3-43.





jump upon and leap frog between posts, on which salaries are marked. Their actions forcibly remove Englishmen from their 'posts'. Other prints also play upon English loss at Scots' gain, for example *Scotch Arrogance or the English worthies turn'd of Doors – 1762* (Fig. 74). Kilted and tartaned Scots forcibly remove Englishmen, using violence and its threat, whilst Englishmen assert their liberty through reasoned argument. One Scot says 'I'll knock your brains out if you open your mouth', to which the Englishman replies 'I will be heard if it costs me my life.' It is a satire that invokes both English national identity, in the form of liberty, and national stereotyping in the characterisation of Scots as a violent people. Another expression of the perceived preferment and opportunism of the Scots were the many prints which show Scots queuing up to come to England. Prints in this vein picture Scots arriving in England (usually London), where they queue for favours, for example *The Caledonian Voyage to Money-Land* (Fig. 75) and *The Caledonians arrival in Money-Land* (Fig. 76), both dated May 1762. Scots and Scottishness were therefore rather more than peripheral to the conduct of English public life (the concept of Britishness not having yet evolved sufficiently to integrate each). But these prints also demonstrate the ease with which ideas were spread and communicated to a broad audience.

Written communication was vital in disseminating ideas from London to the provinces. Private correspondence, between artists and between patrons, was one important method, but the publication of new texts, and the translation of existing and new writing in languages other than English on the theory of art became increasingly important to the dissemination of artistic ideas during the eighteenth century. The publication of these texts was not confined to London. In Glasgow, The Foulis Press,

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judgement of merit, whilst the theatre polemic appeals to the readers engagement with other levels of popular culture, in particular the broad sheets and prints which satirised the Scots and the Scots language.

the university's official booksellers from 1741, published a small number of books of art theory. *Dialogue sur la connaissance de la Peinture* (1753/4) by Charles Coypel, Dufresnoy's *Judgement on Painters* (1755), an edition of Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks* (1743-5), Longin's *On the Sublime* (1747, 1751, 1763, 1790) and Joseph Addison's *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy* (1755).<sup>133</sup>

Robert and Andrew Foulis were responsible not only for the university press, but also for the Foulis Academy, an art academy based upon French and Italian models. Their interest in art was therefore strong, but the number of books they published on that subject appears to be relatively small. This may be explained by the dominance of this subject by a rival publishing house in Glasgow, R. Urie. Urie's offerings included Winkelmann's *Reflections concerning the imitation of the Grecian Artists in Painting and Sculpture*, eleven years after its original German edition of 1755, and Algarotti's *Essay on Painting* in 1764.<sup>134</sup> The dissemination of art theory, wherever published, was through the numerous booksellers, and circulating libraries, as well as personal loans. Awareness of art theory must therefore have been strong amongst the educated societies of Glasgow and Edinburgh. If such a point need be made, the activities of Glasgow's publishing houses demonstrate that intellectual activity in Scotland was not reliant upon London for its ideas, but was able to look directly to the Continent (a point which must surely question the simple model of metropolitan emulation put forward by Clive and Bailyn).

<sup>133</sup> The Foulis Press was a leading seller of classical texts, from the early 1740s it published in Greek and Latin, with an international reputation. For the Foulis Press and the Foulis Academy see Brookes, pp.6-13.

<sup>134</sup> The texts published by Foulis and Urie are listed in Irwin, pp.86-87 & fn.11. Other texts published by Urie were Joseph Addison, *Dialogues upon the Usefulness of Ancient Medals* (1751) and the sixteenth-century text by Dolce, *Dialogue on Painting* (1770).

Reviews of exhibitions were another important textual source of opinion and information.<sup>135</sup> Reviews of the early London exhibitions were reported only irregularly in the press, and were generally in the form of letters sent to the editor. However, in the 1770s more reviews appeared more consistently, while the papers became less reliant upon unsolicited opinions. The *Morning Post* began in 1773 to publish systematic reviews of the Royal Academy exhibitions, a process that was not free of the art of puffing.<sup>136</sup> However, reviews were not always generous, and were even subject to national stereotyping. In 1781, the satirical pamphlet, *The Earwig*, carried a review of Alexander Runciman's *The Parting of Lord and Lady Russell*. The painting was described as a 'sturdy, raw-boned Caledonian picture, all brick dust and Scotch snuff.'<sup>137</sup> The wide circulation of London based papers ensured that such reviews reached the provincial connoisseur and artist, providing them with news of the latest London exhibitions.

From the evidence presented above it is clear that artists in the provinces had considerable points of contact with the centre of the artistic establishment in London although ideas and fashions inevitably took time to reach provincial towns. But the establishment of regular exhibitions in the late 1760s enabled the works of contemporary artists to be seen by a much broader spectrum of the population than ever before, both first hand and through the various forms of communication discussed above. Prints continued to be vital for the dissemination of latest fashions in art.<sup>138</sup> The craze for

<sup>135</sup> Whitley, especially pp.211-214, contains a number of examples of exhibition and picture reviews, most often executed with a far from 'Impartial Hand.'

<sup>136</sup> Maura Barnett, 'The Contemporary Response to British Art before Ruskin's 'Modern Painters': An Examination of Exhibition reviews Published in the British Periodical Press and the Journalist Art Critics who penned them, from the late eighteenth Century to 1843.' Unpublished doctoral thesis, 2 Vols., University of Warwick, 1993, Vol.1, pp.6-7.

<sup>137</sup> Quoted in Brookes, p.79.

<sup>138</sup> For the broad dissemination of prints in Britain see Clayton, *passim*. Prints were also part of the commercial strategies of Reynolds and Wright. In Reynolds's case paintings were known through prints before they were exhibited, and more mezzotints were made from his work than from any of his

grangerized portrait prints undoubtedly had a powerful effect on the print market in terms of sales. However, it would have also helped spread the most fashionable trends in portraiture to provincial portrait painters and their sitters, and in this way London's influence in the provinces was also direct, not reliant upon visiting or itinerant artists.<sup>139</sup>

As in London, the greatest demand in the provinces was for portraiture. The prestige of London-based artists such as Sir Joshua Reynolds or Thomas Gainsborough (after 1774), with exclusivity born of price, contributed towards the choice of these artists over local painters, although quality was of course vital. Collectors and connoisseurs placed great importance on the relative fitness of works and artists to be displayed in their collections. Gainsborough was evidently extremely highly regarded by collectors during his own lifetime, as visitors' accounts of Stourhead reveal that one of his landscapes was hung in the Picture Gallery alongside works by such eminent old masters as Rembrandt, Claude and Cuyp – and was much admired by the tourists.<sup>140</sup> Reynolds too enjoyed prestigious company at Wilton House, in 1768 portraits by him were hanging in the New Dining-Room alongside works by Vandyck, Holbein, and his contemporary William Hoare (1707-1792). However, modern works were not allowed to intrude upon the spectacle and prestige of the Great Room, where the only paintings hung were ten full-lengths by Vandyck.<sup>141</sup> Further, the hanging described above demonstrates

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contemporaries. In addition his broad sweeps of light and shade were partly conditioned by the requirements of the mezzotint. See Martin Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds The Subject Pictures*, Cambridge, 1995, p.42. In terms of display, Clayton indexes a number of possibilities: some were kept in albums, but they might also be found applied to furniture, fans, pasted onto walls, or hung on walls over fireplaces, doors or in alcoves.

<sup>139</sup> For Grangerism, see Pointon (1993), pp.53-62.

<sup>140</sup> Susan Legouix Sloman, 'The Holloway Gainsborough: its subject re-examined', *Gainsborough's House Review*, 1997/8, pp.47-54. Sloman reveals that Gainsborough's *Open Landscape with Mounted Peasants going to Market*, was hung in the same room as Poussin's *Rape of the Sabines*.

<sup>141</sup> James Kennedy, *A New Description of the Pictures, Statues, Bustos and Basso-Relievos, and other Curiosities at the Earl of Pembroke's House at Wilton*, London, 1768, in particular pp.34-58. For other examples of aristocratic picture display see Thomas Martyn, *The English Connoisseur*, London, 1766, 2 vols.

the acutely important conceptions of quality and status associated with a national reputation, for example Gainsborough, or more humbly a local one, as with Raeburn.

This qualitative judgement can be demonstrated in the correspondence between Lord Frederick Campbell and George Home in December 1812 and January 1813, regarding portraits of Campbell painted by Raeburn, Gainsborough and a copyist respectively, when the sitter wished to gift his likeness to his friend. In December 1812 Campbell wrote from Mayfair 'with regard to my portrait, if Raeburn's Painting is worthy of your Collection it is from this instant yours and Mr Darcy who has the measure of it shall have orders to ornament it with a proper frame.' In response to Home's reply to his letter Campbell returned in January 1813, 'I do not wonder that you are not satisfied with Raeburn's Picture - Upon consideration I am resolv'd it shall never crowd your walls. To oblige a Friend of mine here, I have lately employed a good Artist to copy Gainsborough's original Picture of me; ...He has done it well & He shall make another Copy for you - I am truly anxious to be numbered at Paxton amongst your Friends - none can esteem you more.'<sup>142</sup> A copy after Gainsborough was evidently worthy of hanging amongst Home's collection, but an original by Raeburn was not. What makes these letters particularly poignant is that whilst Home rejected Raeburn's portrait of Campbell for his collection, he received advice from Raeburn on the effect of light within his new 'gallery' at Paxton later that same year.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> SRO GD 267/17/12. Home was not the only patron to regard Raeburn's work as inferior to other artists. He seems to have enjoyed a varied reputation, for example in 1817 Sir David Wilkie wrote to Lord Leven concerning the choice of artist for a portrait of the Earl of Hopetoun, SRO GD26.13.297, fols.1-13 - 'If Mr Raeburn is to be passed over...it must be for one of first rate excellence', also quoted in Thomson, p.209. On this occasion he was evidently employed. However, earlier in the century, in 1802, Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville, was asked to sit for a portrait by the Directors of the Bank of Scotland. He was to 'sit for his picture to some eminent artist either in Edinburgh or London.' Dundas chose Raeburn. Quoted in Thomson, p.204.

<sup>143</sup> SRO GD267/22/6 Letter from Robert Reid to George Home, 14 September 1813. Reid tells Home that he had a long conversation with Raeburn on the effect of light in a room.

During the eighteenth century, Raeburn had a considerable number of competitors in Edinburgh. Returning there from Italy in 1787, he would have met as rivals John Thomas Seton, David Allan, David Martin and Alexander Nasmyth, all resident portrait painters at this date. However, Nasmyth and Allan owned more of a reputation for group portrait and conversation pieces than for the single portraits offered by Martin, Seton and Raeburn. Additional competition came from George Watson (1767-1837), who was painting portraits by 1790. He evidently proved to be strong competition for Raeburn, who in 1812 resigned from the *Associated Society of Artists* over the hanging of Watson's portraits and his own. Raeburn said of Watson 'he cannot prevail upon himself to act a second part in the eye of the public to any man in his own line.'<sup>144</sup>

Throughout the second half of the century, portrait painters in Edinburgh were continuously subject to competition. During the 1750s William Millar, John Alexander, William Mosman and Allan Ramsay were variously in the city. In the early 1760s the competition was mainly between George Chalmers, William Millar and John Alexander. However, there was a general decline in the number of artists working in Edinburgh during the later 1760s, and only William Millar and George Chalmers remained resident in the city until the early 1770s. In that decade Anne Forbes arrived from Italy, via London, and John Thomas Seton practised for a few years before setting off for London and India. The 1760s and 1770s were relatively poorly served in comparison with the rest of the eighteenth century.

In comparison, Norwich, as has already been discussed, was rather reliant upon large numbers of visiting and itinerant artist. Only one or two portrait painters appear to have taken up permanent residence at any one time; John Theodore Heins and Thomas Bardwell were present in the 1750s, and Thomas Bardwell, Henry Smith, and John Heins

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<sup>144</sup> Quoted in Thomson, p.208. This sentiment is not unusual at this date.

(jnr.) resided in the city in the early 1760s (although the latter was not a prolific portrait painter).<sup>145</sup> Throughout the later eighteenth century numerous artists visited for one or two years - Henry Stoppeloer in 1755 or 1756, James Ferguson in 1752, Adrian Carpenter in 1757 and G.B. Tunna in 1756. Fewer visiting artists are recorded in the 1760s, but they appear to have stayed longer or made return visits.<sup>146</sup> In the 1770s Norwich was served mainly by visiting and itinerant portrait painters, a trend which appears to have been carried through into the 1780s. William Stephenson made his home there between 1783 and 1821, and several artists seem to have made return visits to the city or stayed for a few years, examples being the portrait painters William Beechey and George Roth.<sup>147</sup> The 1790s appear to be less well documented and only the name of M. Immanuel can be added to those of Stephenson and Roth as artists resident in the city.<sup>148</sup>

Portraiture also dominated in Liverpool, where the population was likewise able to support a number of portraitists at one time. These were not simply visiting artists, but painters resident in significant numbers in the city over a prolonged period. Thomas Chubbard, William and Richard Caddick were there throughout the 1760s, 70s and 80s and therefore would have provided the mainstay of portraiture in the city, supplemented by visiting and itinerant painters. Their position was perhaps comparable with that of William Millar and George Chalmers in Edinburgh, at a similar period.<sup>149</sup>

Landscape painters, whilst inevitably fewer in number, appear to have enjoyed consistent patronage in Edinburgh. The Norie family of decorative and classical landscape painters undoubtedly played a significant part in this tradition, as they trained a number of artists. In the early 1760s Alexander Runciman, William Delacour, James

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<sup>145</sup> Thomas Bardwell (1704-1767) was the author of *The Practice of Painting and Perspective made Easy*, 1756.

<sup>146</sup> Henry Spicer, John Sanders and Bernard Paul visited Norwich in the 1760s.

<sup>147</sup> Roth continued to make return visits in the 1790s.

<sup>148</sup> Fawcett (1976-78), *passim*.

Cumming and Robert Norie were all practising in Edinburgh. However, the provision of landscape painters did not fluctuate as much as numbers of portrait painters, perhaps because their work was also seen to fulfil a decorative role and because artists could turn their hand to other genres.<sup>150</sup> But their numbers do seem to have declined from the late 1760s, thereafter remaining at only one or two.

Fawcett's research into the fine arts in Norwich has identified portrait rather than landscape painters (to contrast with the early years of the nineteenth century). The explanation for this is likely to lie in the numerous drawing masters who resided in Norwich also fulfilling this latter role. John Heins (jnr.) produced landscapes and etchings from the mid 1750s through to the mid 1760s, before he moved to London. William Williams was a man of many talents and from 1767 to 1770 he painted landscapes, history paintings and portraits before moving north to paint theatre scenery. Joseph Brown, who died in 1800 having been in the city for fifty years, was according to his obituary, the 'Norwich Claude'.<sup>151</sup> But for all Brown's local reputation when alive, little is known of him now.

The evidence for landscape painting in Liverpool is stronger, and takes a material form in an account of the exhibits of two exhibitions held in the city in the later eighteenth century.<sup>152</sup> It is clear from the exhibits listed that many artists described as portrait painters were generalists who also painted landscapes and, significantly, seascapes, the popularity of which surely lay in the central importance of the sea to Liverpool's prosperity, and in making the fortunes of many of the artists' patrons. Henry Chubbard, William Jackson, Patrick McMorland, Christopher Pack, Joseph Perry, J.G.

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<sup>149</sup> Dibdin and Darcy, *passim*.

<sup>150</sup> For example Alexander Runciman produced portraits, landscapes and history paintings, and William Delacour was also the first Master of the Trustees' Academy.

<sup>151</sup> Fawcett (1976-78), *passim*.

<sup>152</sup> Dibdin, *passim*.



Williams and John Williamson were all described in the catalogue of the 1774 Liverpool Academy exhibition as local artists, and all exhibited land or seascapes. At the 1787 exhibition Thomas Chubbard, William Jackson, Joseph Parry, W. Place, C. Town all exhibited landscapes or sea pieces.<sup>153</sup> These Liverpoolian artists are perhaps representative of provincial artists in general, being specialists in one area, while painting other genres as required. The importance of seascapes in a city whose increasing wealth and development depended upon the sea would seem to be a significant expression of her local identity. However, this local identity is one which also impinges upon British national identity through its most potent symbol - expansion overseas and place as a trading nation.<sup>154</sup> History paintings were exhibited at the Liverpool exhibitions, although their numbers were few. At the 1784 exhibition William Tate exhibited *Bellisarius and his Daughter* and in 1787 Sir Joshua Reynolds sent *The Death of Dido*. History painting did not find much encouragement in Liverpool.

Artists who wished to describe themselves as history painters could, with the possible exception of Benjamin West, not find sufficient patronage to work exclusively within that exalted genre in London, let alone elsewhere. A letter from David Allan to the Earl of Buchan demonstrates that in Edinburgh the prospects for a history painter were no better. Writing from 'New' Edinburgh, 3 December 1780, Allan laments to his patron Buchan that 'I wishis[?] was in the invention groupe as I [?] began at Rome, but has been obliged like many others to give it up fore want of encouragm't. It is deplorable to think that Great Britain in General has not sooner begun to encourage the young ones in the Study of History the noble part of painting, Sir Joshua Reynolds aims with his pamphlets & [?] academic discourses to correct their tast, this is praiseworthy but a

<sup>153</sup> Dibdin, pp.80- 81& 86.

<sup>154</sup> For the evolving tradition of marine painting in Liverpool see A. S. Davidson, *Marine Art & Liverpool Painters, Places & Flag Codes 1760-1960*, Wolverhampton, 1986.

difficult task.<sup>155</sup> Gainsborough had expressed similar doubts as to the usefulness of Reynolds's *Discourses*. In an undated letter to William Hoare, Gainsborough wrote 'but betwixt Friends Sir Joshua either forgets, or does not chuse see that his Instruction is all adapted to form the History Painter, which he must know there is no call for in this country.'<sup>156</sup> Allan's letter further demonstrates the awareness of provincially based artists and patrons of contemporary artistic debates.

Despite want of encouragement, a number of Edinburgh artists were able to find patronage for their pictures of historical subjects. The following artists described themselves as painters of history - John Alexander in the 1750s, Alexander Runciman in the 1760s, 1770s, and early 1780s, Charles Pavillon in the 1770s and David Allan in the 1780s and 1790s. The number of history painters in Edinburgh, though few, is quite startling in comparison with other centres. In Norwich, Fawcett records only William Williams who worked in the city for only three years, and was a painter of many genres.<sup>157</sup> However, from the pictorial evidence it is apparent that the history pictures the artists in Edinburgh found a market for were not grand scale oil paintings for important public buildings or elegant country houses, but etchings and engravings. In effect, they encountered similar difficulties and resorted to similar solutions in the marketing of history paintings as did London artists, if not more so.<sup>158</sup>

The only history painting on a grand scale produced in Scotland in the later eighteenth century was *The Hall of Ossian* (c1772) by Alexander Runciman for Sir John Clerk (it covered the coved ceiling of a room 36 x 24 feet). As has been discussed, the

<sup>155</sup> EUL. LA.IV.26 'David Allan', letter 1. Also partially quoted in Irwin, p.116.

<sup>156</sup> Mary Woodall (ed.) *The Letters of Thomas Gainsborough*, London, 1961, 1963, p.95. Letter to Mr [William] Hoare, unsigned and undated.

<sup>157</sup> Fawcett, (1976-1978), *passim*.

<sup>158</sup> For the market for and reception of history paintings see Louise Lippincott, 'Expanding on portraiture. The market, the public, and the hierarchy of genres in eighteenth-century Britain' in Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (eds.), *The Consumption of Culture 1600-1800*, London & New York, 1995, pp.75-88.

poems of Ossian were compared by contemporaries to those of Homer, and as such were regarded as a fitting subject for history painting; Runciman also produced a number of etchings from the poems, including *Fingal and Conban-cârgla* (c1772) and *Connal at the tomb of his Father*.<sup>159</sup> He went on to exhibit a number of history paintings at the Royal Academy in the 1770s and 1780s.<sup>160</sup>

David Allan's historical pictures were reproduced in engravings and aquatints, media that would produce many more copies than etching but which were more expensive due to the specialist and time consuming execution they required.<sup>161</sup> It is possible to speculate that etchings may have been sold directly from the artist's studio, rather than in the commercial market. Allan's historical subjects, reproduced in the accessible form of prints, covered many subjects, but significantly many seem to have been designed to appeal to a Scottish audience; *The General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland* (1783) and *Laying the Foundation stone of the University of Edinburgh* (1787) can both be described as modern history pictures.<sup>162</sup> Allan's Scottish subject matter drew on images from Allan Ramsay snr.'s *The Gentle Shepherd* and from *Ossian*, works that

<sup>159</sup> Ossian became a very popular subject for artists, its international appeal is discussed in Okum. In 1773 Angelica Kauffman exhibited *Trenmor and Inibaca* at the Royal Academy and in 1799 she exhibited a further subject from the poems. In 1792 the American artist John Trumbull painted *Lamderg and Gelchosa*, the subject was taken up in Germany and Denmark from c1787, and in France after 1798. The first fully illustrated edition of the poems was published in 1795. Runciman's work at Penicuik and his etchings seem to be amongst the earliest images to draw on the poems.

<sup>160</sup> *Satan touched by Ithurel's Spear* (1773); *The Death of Dido* (1778); *Aggripina Landing with the Ashes of Germanicus* (1781) and *The Abdication of Mary, Queen of Scots* (1782). In addition to the Clerks of Penicuik, Runciman was patronised by the Earl of Buchan. He painted an Ascension for the Episcopal Chapel in Edinburgh's Cowgate.

<sup>161</sup> The difference between etchings and engravings and aquatints is of particular significance here. Etchings were actually produced by the artist, and the number of impressions that could be taken was very limited. Engravings and aquatints were made by a specialist engraver, after a work completed by an artist, hundreds of impressions were possible. While etchings made by Rembrandt would have been extremely valuable it is unlikely that the work of contemporary artists as etchers would have been regarded with any similar sort of esteem, and would probably been less valuable than highly worked engravings.

<sup>162</sup> B.M. 1868-3-28-602 and B.M. 1868-3-28-604 respectively.

were produced within the classical forms of pastoral and epic, yet in their language and references point to Scottish culture.<sup>163</sup>

A further way of assessing the extent to which there was public encouragement of the arts in any one location, is through the establishment or otherwise of art institutions. The foundation of the Royal Academy in 1768 was an obvious turning point in consolidating the status and public perception of the British School, manifesting the extent to which the fine arts were integrated into the institutional fabric of society. Accordingly, Reynolds's *Discourses* may be seen to be formative in the idea of a national, if arguably English-orientated, aesthetic.<sup>164</sup> In the light of the formation of a national aesthetic in London, it must now be considered whether it was possible for provincial art institutions to provide a similarly distinctive aesthetic direction, or whether their motivations were unrelated to such elevated sentiments.

Britain's major art institutions outside London were found in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester.<sup>165</sup> Did these provincial art institutions share similar motivations, and were these comparable to that of the Royal Academy - the British establishment for fine artists? The earliest of those under consideration, The Foulis Academy in Glasgow, was established in 1753.<sup>166</sup> Its founders were publishers, with no public responsibility nor duty, yet of the academies under consideration, this is the one which appears to be most centred upon the desire to improve art, grounded in an aesthetic as opposed to commercial ideology.

<sup>163</sup> A full list of Allan's works can be found in Basil Skinner *The Indefatigable Mr Allan*, Edinburgh, 1973, pp.24-27. Allan's aquatints of Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd* were published in the 1780s.

<sup>164</sup> John Barrell 'Sir Joshua Reynolds and the Englishness of English art' in Bhabha pp.154-176.

<sup>165</sup> For art academies in general see Nikolaus Pevsner, *Academies of Art, Past and Present*, Cambridge, 1940.

<sup>166</sup> An earlier art academy, The Academy of St Luke, operated in Edinburgh between 1729 and 1731, it had eighteen artist members including Allan Ramsay, William Adam and John Alexander. It appears to have been predominately a drawing class. See Irwin, pp.83-85.

Based upon French and Italian models, the Foulis Academy provided casts, paintings and prints for its students to copy. Teachers were brought from the Continent and promising students were sent to study in Italy. Housed in Glasgow University, the motivations which lay behind the founding of this academy have parallels with those expressed in the campaigns to establish the Royal Academy, in particular the benefit to the nation. Foulis wrote in 1753 'Whoever imagines he has anything to offer for the good of his country, ought to expose it freely to examination,... If there is genius what a pity it shoul'd be buried, if methods can be found of giving it life, by introducing Establishments proper for the instruction in the beautiful Arts, placing before generous youth the most excellent models, inflaming their minds with noble ambition of equalling them.'<sup>167</sup> As Patricia Brooks has pointed out, an engraving of the Academy interior provides visual evidence of a curriculum firmly orientated towards the painting of history through the study of the antique.<sup>168</sup> The academic approach to teaching, favoured by the Foulis brothers, which was designed to favour history painting may help explain the comparatively large number of artists based in Edinburgh who painted historical subjects. David Allan was a pupil at the Foulis Academy, and is reputed to have made the drawing of the Academy's interior.<sup>169</sup>

The difficulties of funding an art academy that proffered no tangible commercial benefits to a nation politically intent upon economic improvement are demonstrated by the response the brothers received when seeking subscriptions and patronage to

<sup>167</sup> Quoted in Brooks, p.8. Brookes states that this is quotation is taken from Robert Foulis's papers, but her reference gives a date of 3 January 1853, this is probably a typing error. Foulis Letter, 3 January, EUL Laing MSS 2, Parcel 363.

<sup>168</sup> Brookes, p.9. The engraving is attributed to David Allan, a student at the academy (B.M. 1868-3-28-605).

<sup>169</sup> Another artist who attended the Foulis Academy was James Tassie, who produced medallions based upon classical models. For the Foulis Academy see Irwin, pp. 85-90, Brookes, pp. 6-13 and Forbes pp.23-27. Forbes presents a rather different profile of the Academy, emphasising its poor appeal to potential patrons, his interpretation is I feel too heavily biased towards considerations of the market to provide an overall view of the success or failure of the academy.

supplement the financial support they provided through their printing business. Robert Foulis received a discouraging, although probably fair, appraisal of their likely success from Sir John Dalrymple in December 1757. Dalrymple wrote

With all the fine names that you see at this paper, I assure you that the motives of the subscribers need by no means encourage you. Some give their money, because they are vain to do it; others because they are ashamed not to do it: Many repent the moment they had done it. Some subscribe out of regard for me. and others merely because they were teased; and of all this subscription, which you say, flatters you so much, there are not five men who would give Ten Pounds to save you from the Gallows or the Academia from the flames.<sup>170</sup>

The demise of the Foulis Academy in 1775 was the result of the death of one brother, the other being unable to run both the Academy and the printing business it depended upon financially. What can be demonstrated through the history of the Foulis Academy is that in pre-dating the Royal Academy, it also prefigured it, in its artistic and academic motivations, something not found in the other academies under consideration. The Foulis Academy did not appeal to commerce; it did not attempt to promote itself to potential subscribers as a training ground for industry and design. These motivations were those of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Design in London and the Trustees' Academy in Edinburgh. Significantly, the various academies and institutions in Liverpool were torn between academic and commercial motivations, despite being originally inspired by the example of the Royal Academy.

The Trustees' Academy, established in Edinburgh in 1760, was formed by the Board of the Trustees for Improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland, which itself

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<sup>170</sup> Quoted in Forbes pp. 23-24. I do not agree with Forbes pessimistic interpretation of this letter. He finds evidence in it of the Scottish patron classes' profound unconcern and hostility to the project. That this situation can be explained by the products of the school being 'the works of students' and that 'All were products unlikely to appeal to patrons of rank.' If the trouble, conflict and abortive attempts to found the Royal Academy are compared with the politics of the Foulis Academy, we can see that it is perhaps not untypical of the situation of many art institutions in Britain in the eighteenth century. Dalrymple's letter may be unusually honest, but it is doubtful if the motivations for subscriptions are any less admirable than many others would have been.

grew out of the Select Society which had encouraged drawing by offering premiums and awards for the 'encouragement of arts, sciences, manufactures and agriculture'.<sup>171</sup> The Board of the Trustees for Improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland was concerned with art only as part of an overarching doctrine of Improvement. They encouraged art specifically to aid design and to improve drawing skills, for the improvement of industry.<sup>172</sup> Artists were employed as tutors, but students who wished to pursue a career in the fine artist were not encouraged, and therefore it cannot be described in the same academic terms as the Foulis Academy. However, the Trustees' Academy was an intrinsic part of a scheme for economic improvement in Scotland, a doctrine which bore close relation to questions of national identity in that country. Its ethos was determined by members of Edinburgh's elite, and thus it was unable to ignore the formative ideas of taste emerging in Edinburgh that were also formed by this select group.<sup>173</sup>

The connections with industry found at the Trustees' Academy are also evident in Liverpool. The first Liverpool Academy, established just a year after the Royal Academy, comprised twenty-two members, professional artists and interested amateurs. Many of the amateurs also had - as watchmakers, potters and manufacturers - a professional interest in improving the arts. Casts were provided for copying and lectures given on relevant subjects, including perspective and anatomy. This first, and private, institution did not survive for very long. It was, however, resurrected in 1773 as the Society of Artists in Liverpool. This name has a significant and obvious association

<sup>171</sup> A fuller discussion of the Select Society is given earlier in chapter four. Quotation from Irwin p.91. For the Trustees' Academy see Irwin, pp.90-97, and Brookes, *passim*.

<sup>172</sup> It was widely held that excellence in the fine arts could lead to a corresponding improvement in the applied arts. For the foundation of the Society of arts see D.G.C. Allan, *William Shipley Founder of the Royal Society of Arts. A biography with documents*, London 1979.

<sup>173</sup> Allan Ramsay played a founding role, through his membership of the Select Society. He was also consulted on the appointment of Pavillon as drawing master.

with the Society of Artists in London, the artistic rival of the Royal Academy. An important difference between the two groups was the society's democratic ideals, as opposed to the Royal Academy's hierarchical basis, and the renaming of the Liverpool academy may arguably indicate a similar ideological shift. This titular association probably also reflects the similar diversity of arts and artists embraced by Liverpool and the London society, which the Royal Academy did not admit.

The Society of Artists in Liverpool was formed by artists, 'with a view of improving each other, as far as their situation would permit, in some of the more useful arts', a statement which expresses both democratic ideals and commercial interests.<sup>174</sup> The exhibition organised by the society in 1774 reflected both its moral and artistic aims, and its commercial interests. The inclusion of exhibits concerned purely with industrial and commercial value was a point of contention. The main promoter of industry was Matthew Gregson, an upholsterer, and he and his supporters attempted to link the academy with industrial development by introducing designs for furniture into the exhibition.<sup>175</sup> The Society of Artists in Liverpool had folded by November 1775.

When a new society started up in 1783, it was called the Society for Promoting Painting and Design in Liverpool, a name which surely signifies a shift towards manufacturing concerns.<sup>176</sup> The promoters of this society were not artists, but local magnates, minor county gentlemen and manufacturers. The management committee was also comprised of amateurs not artists, who according to Dibdin 'allowed themselves to be nursed anew into collective activity.'<sup>177</sup> However, Darcy argues that while Gregson

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<sup>174</sup> Quoted in Darcy p.26, who also argues that moral improvement was a great concern of one of the society's most influential members, William Roscoe.

<sup>175</sup> Darcy, p.28.

<sup>176</sup> Neither Dibdin nor Darcy have noticed the significance of this change of name.

<sup>177</sup> Dibdin, p.76.



was active in the attempt to revive the society, he was not successful in pushing industrial aims forward within it.<sup>178</sup>

It is therefore evident that there were conflicting ideas about the purpose and usefulness, to both region and nation, of these major regional institutions. Neither academic nor industrial influences guaranteed success or longevity. A significant, if hidden, factor in the ability of a provincial institution to survive may be found in the demise of the Society for Promoting Painting and Design in Liverpool, which collapsed after its second exhibition in 1787.<sup>179</sup> Daniel Daulby, the brother-in-law of William Rosco, wrote to John Holt 'The Society is again dormant, not for want of subscribers to support it...It is, however, much to be regretted that in a small mercantile town like Liverpool, it is extremely difficult to meet with gentlemen who have leisure to conduct such a society; to the want of such gentlemen may be attributed the present suspension of the society for the promoting of the arts.'<sup>180</sup> In an industrial and commercial city, it seems it was difficult to find gentlemen with leisure enough to organise a society of this sort.

There are various degrees of national, local and international outlook governing the establishment of art institutions in the provinces. Institutions in Scotland looked to international models to promote local (Scottish) needs, yet in the case of the Trustees' Academy these needs were tied to an ideology that sought to promote Scotland as an equal partner in Britain. In Liverpool, where emulation of London seems most apparent, local politics played the most significant role in shaping and reshaping the actuality of the various foundations.

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<sup>178</sup> Darcy, p.30.

<sup>179</sup> The holding of two exhibitions was in itself a remarkable achievement for this time.

<sup>180</sup> Quoted in Darcy, pp.32-33.

The cities of Edinburgh, Liverpool and Norwich were not reliant upon London for the provision of artists nor, wholly, their training. As has been discussed, although there was considerable contact between the provinces and London through exhibitions, training, and prints, it is also evident that artists were able to travel a circuit of increasingly wealthy provincial towns, and that it may not have been of any great professional or financial import to visit the capital. Moreover, some local artists provided training. Late eighteenth-century Edinburgh appears to have had a much more fully developed artistic community than other cities considered here. Although Liverpool's various academies and the presence of generations of the same family are evidence of local continuity, this situation began to emerge only in the early 1770s.

A continuity of artistic practice had developed in Edinburgh from the beginning of the century; there were too few artists practising before this date to argue for an established centre of artistic endeavour in the seventeenth century or earlier. In landscape painting the Norie family had established a centre of decorative painting that provided training for further generations of artists, and which can be linked to a locally significant desire amongst patrons to decorate the panelled rooms of their Edinburgh villas and flats with landscapes (these landscapes were not confined to over doors or mantels but might cover any panelled areas of wall). Scotland's landscape painters were therefore able to draw on local sources as well as those of London, and there is ample evidence that they also looked to the Continent.<sup>181</sup> In portraiture Allan Ramsay's national status enabled him to encourage, and influence art at a local level in Scotland, a point considered in the preceding chapter.

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<sup>181</sup> As was discussed in the opening chapter many Scottish artists travelled to Italy, and of course private collections contained work by continental artists. For example Hopetoun House was decorated with mythological and historical works by the Dutch painter Philips Tideman, commissioned in Amsterdam in 1703. The cupola of the main stair case of this house is also decorated in the Dutch style, although possibly executed by a Scottish artist. See Williams (1992), pp.165-7.

Local, national, and international contacts and sources characterise the fine artists in these provincial cities, but what does appear to distinguish them are the numbers of artists they were able to support and the genres of art that were encouraged. Portraiture enjoyed greatest patronage across the nation, but while Edinburgh and increasingly Liverpool sustained a group of resident painters, supplemented by visiting and itinerant artists, in Norwich, despite a long history of resident portrait painters, the town was increasingly reliant upon non-resident artists. In Edinburgh a number of artists sought to define themselves as history painters, a title that was infused with superior artistic and intellectual expectations, and which therefore gives significant insight into the patronage they hoped to attract. Liverpool, through its various institutions, encouraged artists to visit and exhibit in the city, thereby encouraging both local artists and those from outside of the city, though not exclusively from London.

Having considered the practice of fine artists in the provinces, the market for popular art will now be considered through a comparative study. Conclusions pertaining to the local, national, debate and issues of national identity will then be drawn.

## Chapter Five

### Part II

#### Popular Art

In the later eighteenth century art was an increasingly commercial activity. Print sellers appealed to large audiences through the publication of portraits of the famous and infamous, landscapes and scenes from contemporary history.<sup>1</sup> Portraits were taken in minutes through ephemeral and fleeting shadow portraits, the decorative arts flourished and art schools were established. Specialist itinerant artists plied their trade across the nation, auctioneers continued to sell paintings, and pictures could be seen in an increasing variety of public places.<sup>2</sup> As a commercial activity and as a luxury good, certain aspects of the art trade were advertised in the press. The strength of this commercial activity, as evidenced through newspaper advertisements, in Edinburgh will here be compared with that in Derby, Bath, Ipswich and Newcastle.

While the presence of fine artists in Edinburgh is relatively well documented, evidence for what I shall describe as popular art is not found in art historical monographs or on the walls of art galleries. By popular art I mean work that was relatively cheap, small scale, and quickly produced, often reproductive, or in some other means mechanical (for example shadow portraits), adhering to trends and fashions. It was also distinguished by mediums that a rapid execution and which utilised diverse materials such as human hair.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For the commercialisation of history painting see Louise Lippincott, 'Expanding on portraiture. The market, the public, and the hierarchy of genres in eighteenth-century Britain' in Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (eds.) *The Consumption of Culture 1600-1800 Image, Object, Text*, London, 1995, pp.75-88.

<sup>2</sup> For the commercialisation of art in general in the eighteenth century see Solkin (1992), *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Miniature portraits were sometimes made from human hair, often that of the sitter. Whitley, vol.1, pp.230-231, demonstrates that these types of portraits were not chosen for their price alone. Garrick was said to have been particularly fond of hair portraits, he commissioned Anne Louisa Lane to create likenesses from the hair of Lady Spencer and the Duchess of Devonshire.

Speed of execution and the often brief period spent by artists in a particular locale, would seem largely to exclude the influence of a local aesthetic in the production of popular art works. Rather, as was the case with visiting and itinerant fine artists, it would appear more probable that many popular artists attempted to gain greatest and most easily won appeal through conforming to an aesthetic that was widespread in geographic and numerical terms; that was national in its appeal. In addition, the aesthetics of mechanical reproduction would have served to exclude adaptation and encourage uniformity, although of course subject matter could be adapted to particular interests of location and culture. Evidence of the market for popular art is most explicitly found in newspaper advertisements - the principal medium for announcing the arrival of an itinerant artist, the novelty of a particular technique, or the publication and sale of prints. To this populist branch of the art market we can also add the many drawing masters (often professional artists) who taught the eighteenth-century society's young ladies and gentlemen.

The development of consumer society was manifest in the increasing number of newspaper advertisements for goods and services.<sup>4</sup> Whilst the goods generally advertised cannot be classed as those necessary for eighteenth-century life, neither can they be placed within the highest and most luxurious end of the market. Newspaper advertising grew throughout the eighteenth century, most markedly from 1720 onwards, and although it burgeoned in the second half of the century was still thought mean and disreputable amongst wealthy traders in the late 1750s.<sup>5</sup> In comparing Edinburgh's popular art market with the markets in a number of English provincial towns a number of methodological problems must be addressed, but, despite this, it is an approach that

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<sup>4</sup> There is a vast array of scholarship on consumer society in the eighteenth century. A seminal text is Neil McKendrick, John Brewer and J.H. Plumb, *The Birth of Consumer Society: the Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, London, 1982. See also Bermingham and Brewer (eds.) (1995) and Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture, 1660-1790*, London 1988.

provides fresh evidence of artistic life in Edinburgh and the English provinces and of their relative importance as provincial centres.

Advertising's reputation as a medium associated with comparatively low levels of trade, affected its use by artists.<sup>6</sup> As Louise Lippincott has stressed, the only two fine artists to use this marketing medium during the first half of the century were William Hogarth and Arthur Pond, both of whom were coincidentally the only painters with substantial print selling businesses.<sup>7</sup> Direct advertising was associated with book selling, print selling and auctions, lesser though related trades which were not subject to the problems of status that effected fine artists.<sup>8</sup> Newspaper advertising by painters did occur in a disguised and indirect manner, placed as an announcement of social information, and positioned outside the advertising section of the paper, or later in the period in the form of 'disinterested' exhibition reviews.<sup>9</sup>

Direct advertising, involving the overt canvassing for sitters or other painting commissions, was not a promotional form regarded as suitable for fine artists, at least not during the first half of the eighteenth century and probably beyond. During a period in which there was a concerted effort amongst artists to raise the intellectual status of themselves and contemporary British art in general, association with trades' methods would have been particularly problematic.<sup>10</sup> However, Lippincott argues that around

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<sup>5</sup> G.A. Cranfield *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper 1700-1760*, Oxford, 1962, p.207.

<sup>6</sup> Cranfield, p.212 identifies advertisers as predominately skilled craftsmen. Trades associated with fashion and practical trades such as watchmakers, also those involved with education and doctors.

<sup>7</sup> Louise Lippincott, *Selling Art in Georgian London. The Rise of Arthur Pond*, London, 1983, pp.48-50. Both Hogarth and Pond were criticised for their use of this medium, although neither canvassed directly for sitters. Pond used advertisements to announce print publication dates and prices, and Hogarth mentioned the lotteries held of his pictures.

<sup>8</sup> Lippincott (1983), p.48.

<sup>9</sup> Lippincott (1983), pp.49 & 50.

<sup>10</sup> For the intellectual and professional status of art see Barrell (1986), pp.1-162.

mid-century such advertisements did emerge in the provinces, when 'artistic jacks-of-all-trades listed portrait painting in their repertoire of services.'<sup>11</sup>

This assessment needs to be broadened, for although it is apparent from the survey of provincial newspapers undertaken in this dissertation that artists who advertised were not generally painters in oil or even pastel whose prices and status placed their work amongst the first rank, Lippincott's definition (which appears to be based upon general assumptions of the nature of provincial artists) hides a rich and diverse provincial visual culture.<sup>12</sup> Rather, those advertising in the provincial press can be described as the commercial and trades branches of the arts, the middlemen and novelty artists who were concerned with the commercial exploitation of the fine arts: print sellers and auctioneers, organizers of commercial exhibitions and agents who bought and sold paintings. Innumerable painters of miniature portraits toured the country selling their art on its novelty value, until the market had been exhausted of all the sitters that could be extracted through self-promotion and advertisement.<sup>13</sup> In short newspaper advertising was utilized by those associated with the populist art market, whose products appealed to the expanding middling sorts; a growing section of the population whose aspirations to imitate the taste of the elite could most expeditiously be met through reproductions and portraiture.

Provincial newspapers, in which these populist artists advertised, were neither parochial in outlook nor in content. They were filled with national and international news culled from a variety of sources, most importantly London newspapers whose thrice-weekly evening posts were reflected in provincial newspaper design. Other sources were books, periodicals and foreign news reports, also culled from London

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<sup>11</sup> As Lippincott (1983) is primarily concerned with the period up to mid-century, she does not consider whether this form of direct canvassing spread to other fine artists of the calibre or standing of Arthur Pond or William Hogarth later in the century, either in the provinces or London itself.

<sup>12</sup> Lippincott (1983), p.50.

papers. Shipping news and diplomatic reports as well as accounts from travellers were further constituents of the provincial newspaper.<sup>14</sup> Their final and increasingly important constituent was advertisements. Skilled craftsmen and trades associated with fashion were frequent advertisers, as were those such as doctors and tutors who provided specialist services. Medicines, cures and publishing were also advertised extensively – the products themselves often being sold by the newspaper publishers.<sup>15</sup> In addition, advertisements announced assemblies, theatrical productions and lending libraries, as well as making legal announcements.<sup>16</sup>

The effectiveness of advertisements in eighteenth-century newspapers is impossible to gauge. However, given that expenditure was necessary to place an advertisement, the advertisers obviously held the expectation that they had some positive influence over trade. As Jeremy Black has pointed out, newspaper advertising was most useful for products or services imported into a region, or where their availability was unpredictable or whose potential customers had to be persuaded that it was fashionable to consume.<sup>17</sup> Newspapers could, potentially, provide information for consumers desirous of engaging with art through reviews, announcements and advertisements. For those artists whose way of life involved frequent moves between towns, they were an essential means of publicizing their work and availability to a constant stream of new consumers.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> For itinerant artists and their exploitation of the market in the nineteenth century see Fawcett (1974).

<sup>14</sup> Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1987, p.87. This book contains much useful information on the provincial newspaper trade, as does Cranfield.

<sup>15</sup> Neil McKendrick has written much on advertisements as part of the commercialization of eighteenth-century society. In addition to a case study of George Packwood's advertising campaign for a shaving product, for which see below, he discusses fashion, the potteries and leisure, see McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *passim*. Both Black, p.53 and Cranfield, p. 210 point out that advertisements for medicines and publications were often placed by newspaper proprietors, who also distributed them.

<sup>16</sup> Cranfield, pp.212-221.

<sup>17</sup> Black, p.62.

<sup>18</sup> Lippincott (1983), pp.34-52 discusses the various methods artists employed to reach potential patrons. Traditional methods such as personal recommendation, and increasingly during the later eighteenth century methods that can be regarded as a response to an increasingly commercial society. Another increasingly



Newspaper distribution and circulation were central to the effectiveness of advertisements. However, neither of these factors can be ascertained with any certainty for individual newspapers in the eighteenth century, although Cranfield and Black have established useful guidelines that are discussed below. The distribution of London and provincial newspapers was structured through systems of local and remote agents, the post office, and messengers; a system that constituted a highly effective local and national network.<sup>19</sup> Of more importance to this study is the question of circulation, the people who actually had access to these advertisements. While specific quantitative, social and demographic profiles of readers cannot be established, it is possible to gain a general sense of the population who may have encountered provincial papers.

The overall numbers of newspapers produced can be ascertained as they were subject to stamp duty. In 1750 7.3 million stamps were issued, in 1775, 12.6 million, and in 1801 provincial papers alone accounted for the issue of 9 million stamps.<sup>20</sup> Readership was far more extensive than these figures suggest, as contemporary commentators noted the number of readers per individual paper was considerably more; estimates ranged from five to forty. The contents of newspapers were disseminated by a number of means: they were read aloud, circulated amongst friends, were available in public places such as coffee houses, and they could be rented from hawkers. Another factor in assessing circulation is the increase in the numbers of papers read by

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important way in which artists could demonstrate their abilities to potential patrons was the public exhibition, which by its very nature promoted comparison between artists, as well as publicising the eminence of their patronage. Fawcett (1974) places the emergence of art exhibitions in the provinces in the nineteenth century. The research put forward in this chapter will demonstrate that exhibitions in the provinces were in fact occurring at an earlier date and in a variety of guises not considered by Fawcett.

<sup>19</sup> These systems of distribution are not of central importance to this thesis, however, they do play an important role in revealing the way in which prints could have been distributed to the print and booksellers who were also often newspaper publishers. For distribution see Black, pp.99-104 and Cranfield, pp.178-179.

<sup>20</sup> Black, p.105, does not state whether these figures refer to Britain or England, however, given the general subject of his book it is likely that he is referring to Britain.

individuals.<sup>21</sup> Further, the circulation of advertisements may have been different from news items. The *General Advertiser and Morning Chronicle* recorded in 1777 that that part of the paper allotted to advertisements was daily posted in every public place throughout London and Westminster. Whether this practice was copied in other public places or other towns, or by other newspapers, is unknown but would seem possible.<sup>22</sup> Newspaper advertisements therefore reached a large population, with provincial papers circulating into the surrounding country through well-established distribution networks, and it is therefore likely that any advertising they carried would have been effective in reaching a large section of the population.

Individual papers varied greatly in respect to circulation, distribution and the quantity of advertising. G. A. Cranfield has categorized provincial papers according to the number of advertisements they contained per annum, and while the use of a quantitative analysis of art related advertising is problematic, the broad based quantitative analysis produced by Cranfield provides a useful contextual framework for the qualitative assessment of advertisements to be carried out here.<sup>23</sup> In particular his division of provincial newspapers by numbers of advertisements into three tiers is useful in identifying regional dominance of particular papers.<sup>24</sup>

The *Newcastle Courant*, *Bath Journal*, *Derby Mercury* and *Ipswich Journal* were weekly publications containing a mixture of national and local news and advertising.<sup>25</sup> Their content, while conforming to the general profile already described, varied according to local interests. For example, the *Ipswich Journal* contained a much higher agricultural content than did the *Bath Journal*. In Ipswich agricultural markets, land

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<sup>21</sup> Black, pp.104-7.

<sup>22</sup> Black, p.61.

<sup>23</sup> Cranfield, p.210.

<sup>24</sup> Black, p.55.

sales, and the services of stallions were of importance, whilst the residents of Bath had more urbane concerns. The art related advertising carried by these papers, over the period 1750 to 1800, will be compared with those published in one of Scotland's most important newspapers of the period, the Edinburgh based *Caledonian Mercury*.<sup>26</sup>

Published thrice weekly, the *Caledonian Mercury* was, together with the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* and the *Weekly Mercury*, one of Scotland's most respected newspapers.<sup>27</sup> It falls within Cranfield's top tier of advertising newspapers and enjoyed a circulation of 1400 in 1739. John Dwyer has found evidence of a readership that, at least in part, consisted of the highly literate and educated members of Edinburgh and Scotland's elite and middling sorts; an audience well suited to the virtuous appeal of the visual arts. It was a paper that both reflected and promoted the values of Edinburgh's literati: national identity, economic improvement, religious tolerance and polite manners.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to the *Caledonian Mercury*, Cranfield's top tier of advertising newspapers (those that regularly contained two thousand or more advertisements per

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<sup>25</sup> The *Ipswich Journal* and *Newcastle Courant* were published on a Saturday, the *Derby Mercury* on a Friday and the *Bath Journal* on a Monday. Black, p.100, points out that many papers were published on market day to boost circulation.

<sup>26</sup> The English provincial newspapers were consulted on the microfilm series *18th Century Provincial English Newspapers, in association with the British Libraries Newsplan*, Harvester Microfilm. These English newspapers were chosen because they offered a largely uninterrupted series over the period 1750-1800. They also cover a range of the various types of provincial towns i.e., regional capitals, county towns, emerging industrial centres etc. All available issues of the *Caledonian Mercury* within this period were researched, for most years this meant an occasional missing issue, however, the whole of the year 1770 was not available. Editions of the *Caledonian Mercury* were consulted in the Bodleian Library, Edinburgh Public Library, The National Library of Scotland and the Signet Library, Edinburgh. I am grateful to the many librarians who assisted me in this research. A comparative profile of the English towns was derived through researching one year in every five. Typically this was 1750, 1755, 1760 etc., however in cases when substantial numbers of issues for that year were missing, an adjacent year was consulted.

<sup>27</sup> The *Caledonian Mercury* (hence forward *CM*) was published thrice weekly, on a Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. In 1776 it was published daily.

<sup>28</sup> John Dwyer, 'The Caledonian Mercury and Scottish National Culture, 1763-1802' in *Journal of History and Politics*, 1989, vol.7, pp.147-69. This is in contrast to previous assessments of the paper which, as Dwyer p.147 points out, described it as a news sheet, chiefly consisting of advertisements and with no interest in cultural matters. He also states, p.149, that the literati and Scottish landed society looked upon the *Caledonian Mercury* as a 'highly respectable organ', that it was the first choice of landed gentlemen who wished to publicise county meetings.

annum) includes the *Newcastle Journal* and the *Ipswich Journal*. Therefore surveying these particular Edinburgh and Ipswich papers we are considering the dominant advertising newspapers in these areas. However, the choice of the *Newcastle Courant* for this study must concede that it was probably not the major carrier of advertisements in late eighteenth-century Newcastle, it probably fits, together with the *Bath Journal*, into Cranfield's second tier, a category that includes the majority of county newspapers, which averaged around one thousand advertisements per year.<sup>29</sup> In the third category, consisting of newspapers which rarely contained more than five hundred advertisements per year, the *Derby Mercury* falls. Such a wide variation in the quantity of advertising carried by individual papers must be taken into consideration when assessing the results of the survey carried out of art-related advertisements, not least because this factor was unrelated (apparently) to the population within a distribution area, or the number of trades-people it contained.

In addition, there are innumerable variables which prevent a direct quantitative comparison of any of the trades, occupations or advertisements placed. Newspaper advertisements do not furnish a comprehensive list of all those selling or providing services as they are self-selected by the advertisers themselves.<sup>30</sup> Nonetheless, in the case of those selling art of a populist kind, they do constitute a reasonable guide to its variety and availability. However, one must still point out that advertising, including the indirect although more respectable puffs and announcements, was still only a minor, though slowly growing means by which artists could attract patronage. It must be considered as only one element in the many promotional methods adopted by artists:

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<sup>29</sup> Cranfield does not categorise the *Bath Journal* or *Newcastle Courant*, however, from my research it is evident that the *Bath Journal* contains far fewer advertisements than the *Ipswich Journal*, and significantly more than *Derby Mercury*. The *Newcastle Courant* also seems to fit most closely in this group. The other papers mentioned have all been categorised by Cranfield, except the *Caledonian Mercury*.

<sup>30</sup> Aside from this self-defining restriction, a quantitative analysis is problematic given the incomplete nature of these newspapers and simply the unavoidable human failing in noticing all such advertisements.

painting tours of the provinces, drawing lessons, friendship, personal recommendation, family contacts, reciprocal work from related and non-related businesses and specialist trades people, contact through sociable clubs and societies, prints after their work and exhibitions (several of which methods were themselves advertised).<sup>31</sup>

Advertising that appealed directly to the reading public for business is to be principally considered here. Indirect advertising in which announcements were placed in news rather than advertising sections has not been taken into account, although it was the method favoured of metropolitan fine artists.<sup>32</sup> The art-related advertisements placed in the *Caledonian Mercury* and other provincial papers have been divided for present purposes into seven categories: artists and engravers, drawing masters and art academies, other art related occupations and trades, print subscriptions, auction sales, paintings and prints for sale and publication, exhibitions and finally art related publications (treatise, drawing books and print collections). Many of these categories overlap, and commodities fitting various categories were often contained within the same advertisement.

As Lippincott noticed with respect to the first half of the century, it may be observed that many advertisements promoting named artists and engravers resident in Edinburgh in the late eighteenth century were careful not to pursue patrons directly. They tended to use subtle means – announcing the publication or opening of a subscription for prints, a change of address or alterations to business arrangements. For example, on Tuesday 19 February 1754 an advertisement was placed announcing that Andrew Bell, engraver, had published a half length mezzotint portrait of George Drummond Esq., late Lord Provost of Edinburgh, from an original painting by John

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<sup>31</sup> Lippincott (1983), p.34.

<sup>32</sup> Lippincott (1983), p.50. Whitley utilised just these puffs and announcements in *Artists and their Friends in England*, London, 1928, to add considerably to our understanding of British art. However, in

Alexander (c1690-1757). It was sold at Bell's house and the shop of Messers Hamilton and Balfour and other booksellers in the town. This advertisement was both a direct appeal from the printseller for business and an indirect form of advertising for the long established artist John Alexander. Another form in which contemporary artists' names consistently, if intermittently, appeared in advertisements, was on the death of a fellow artist. The sale of the collection of pictures belonging to the late John and Cosmo Alexander was to be held at the house of Sir George Chalmers, while another advertisement stated, in more overt language, that claims on the estate of the late William Delacour should be addressed to 'Mr Caldwell, Limner.'<sup>33</sup> Obviously such advertisements were necessary, however, their advantage to the surviving artist was twofold; their name was advertised in a socially legitimate manner and, more importantly, in association with the deceased artist of repute.

However, direct advertising by artists began to appear in provincial newspapers midway through the eighteenth century. This is certainly evident in the *Caledonian Mercury* from the 1760s, and became more recurrent in the 70s and 80s. James Wales advertised his availability as a portrait painter in 1776 and, in 1792, J. Medina, portrait painter, informed the nobility and gentry that he continued to paint portraits at his house in World's End Close, that he instructed young ladies and gentlemen in drawing, and that he cleaned and repaired paintings in Town and Country.<sup>34</sup> By the 1790s newspaper advertising was used so often by artists that we can classify the frequency with which some painters advertised as a campaign, as for example in the case of the miniature

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comparison with the metropolitan examples detailed by Whitley this was a relatively rare phenomenon in provincial newspapers and therefore has not been pursued in the course of this research.

<sup>33</sup> CM 2/3/73 & 24/4/67. Irwin, pp.45-6, states that Cosmo and his father, John Alexander, were out in the Forty-Five, and that whilst exiled in Italy were associated with George Chalmers, also a Jacobite supporter. Irwin further states that on the Alexanders' return to Britain, Cosmo remained in London in the house left to him by the architect James Gibbs. According to Daphne Foskett *A Dictionary of British Miniature Painters*, 2 vols., London, 1972, John Caldwell (c1738-1819) practised as a miniaturist and artist in

painter Mrs Collins, who advertised her presence in Edinburgh to the paper's readers in March, April and May 1784.<sup>35</sup> Aeneas Macpherson took direct advertising a stage further in 1794, promoting himself as a painter of portraits and history, who had 'after unwearied application to the study of this Art' commenced business in the city. He also laid down the (relatively expensive) prices for his work, although only for portraiture. Portraits in oil, first size, were six guineas; full length, twenty-four guineas; miniatures from three to eight guineas and sketches half a guinea.<sup>36</sup> Although prices for portrait painters in miniature were generally given in advertisements, their presence for portraits in oil is, in this survey, unique.<sup>37</sup> The most frequent advertisers were either those who appear to have specialized as drawing masters or itinerant artists who also advertised, often in the same space, their portraits in miniature.

Although no painters in miniature advertised in the 1750s, Mr Laimé 'returned' from London in 1762 and in 1771 Mr [John] Bogle advertised himself as a painter in miniature.<sup>38</sup> However by the late 1770s it is apparent from the advertising columns that there was considerable competition in the city amongst these painters, and a significant

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crayons in Scotland. A miniature of an unknown man in the V&A is signed Caldwell. (Foskett, Plate 35: no.111).

<sup>34</sup> For James Wales see *CM* 9/12/76, for Medina (1720-1796) *CM* 21/7/1792.

<sup>35</sup> *CM* 22/12/83, 3/3/84, 3/4/84 and 1/5/84. Frequent and closely spaced advertisements appear to have been placed by miniature painters and those on short visits. Other examples include J. Miers on 7/10/86, 18/10/86, 24/5/87, 24/11/87, 6/12/87, 21/1/88 and 5/6/88. An excellent case study of an eighteenth-century advertising campaign is that of George Packwood, see Neil McKendrick 'George Packwood and the Commercialization of Shaving. The Art of Eighteenth-century Advertising or "The Way to Get Money and be Happy."' in McKendrick, Brewer & Plumb, pp.146-194.

<sup>36</sup> *CM* 18/12/94.

<sup>37</sup> An example of prices given for miniatures is that of J. Miers, miniature profile painter, who advertised his charges as between 6 shillings and 10s 6d, depending upon finish and frame *CM* 7/10/86. Other artists who advertised were John Medina in 1776, 1777 and 1792 (*CM* 9/12/76, 28/6/77 & 21/7/92), Mr [Alexander] Nasmyth, in 1789 and 1795 (*CM* 17/10/89 & 28/5/95), and Mr Weir portrait and history painter in 1795(*CM* 16/11/95).

<sup>38</sup> I can find no mention of a Mr Laimé in either Foskett or Harry Blättel, *International Dictionary Miniature Painters, Porcelain painters, Silhoettists*, Munich, 1992. However, Algernon Graves *A Dictionary of Artists who have exhibited works in the principal London Exhibitions from 1760-1893*, Bath, 1969, lists a number of artists by that name as exhibiting in London during this period. According to Foskett, John Bogle (1746?-1803) studied at the Foulis Academy and practised as a miniature painter in both London and Edinburgh. Between 1769 and 1770 he exhibited at the Society of Arts from Edinburgh, and between 1772 and 1794 exhibited at the Royal Academy from London. He returned to Edinburgh in 1800. Examples are in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the National Gallery of Scotland.

turnover of artists. Mrs Harrington, from London, was resident in 1777, as, in 1778, was Joseph Salkend from England.<sup>39</sup> 1780 found Signor Rossi from Italy, Mrs Schetky and Mr Mercier all advertising their presence in the city.<sup>40</sup> Mercier evidently remained in the city until at least 1782, and by 1783 T. Snagg and Mrs Collins, both from London, appeared in the newspaper columns.<sup>41</sup> Throughout the 1780s and 90s at least two artists appeared to establish themselves annually in the city and to engage in a campaign of advertising in the press.

Considering the number of miniature portraitist painters visiting Edinburgh, particularly during the 1780s and 90s, there was, presumably, considerable competition between them. However, there is no sense of this in the placement of their newspaper advertisements, for though two or more miniaturists advertised their practice in the city during any one year, their announcements were placed sufficiently far apart to exclude any notion of competitiveness being displayed through advertising. Advertisements for different artists appear at least two months apart (the *Caledonian Mercury* was published at least thrice weekly) although those for the same artist appear closer together.<sup>42</sup> From

<sup>39</sup> According to Foskett, Mrs Harrington of Birmingham (fl.1775-1787) painter in miniature, placed an advertisement in the *Oxford Journal* on 1 July 1775. Letters patent were granted to her at Broad Street, Oxford.

<sup>40</sup> This is possibly Giuseppe Rossi (c1732-1796) who, according to Blättel, was a painter in miniature who was born and died in Genoa. Foskett records that Mrs John George Christoff Schetky, née Maria Anna Theresa Reinagle (d.1796) was the eldest daughter of Joseph Reinagle, an Hungarian born composer resident in Edinburgh. She was the sister of Philip Reinagle R.A, her two sons were painters, and her daughter a miniaturist. Blättel lists a number of artists of the name of Mercier who might correspond with this artist, however no definite identification is possible.

<sup>41</sup> *CM* 4/12/62, 9/1/71, 15/2/77, 21/2/78, 5/2/80, 3/6/80, 11/12/80, 23/1/82, 22/1/83 & 22/12/83. Only the first date on which they advertised are given here. Foskett identifies Thomas Snagg (1746-1812) as a man of many talents. Born in London he trained as an upholsterer before becoming an actor in 1764. He played alongside Garrick at Drury Lane and Manchester, and lived in Dublin c1770-1774. He was married in Edinburgh in March 1783, and that same year went to live abroad, returning to Dublin in 1800. Mrs Collins (fl.c1777-1778) was according to Foskett a much travelled miniaturist and probably the wife of John Collins painter of profile miniatures. Her main selling points were that she had been a pupil of Mrs Harrington and had purchased a moiety of that lady's patent. Having taken profiles of the royal family she made a tour of Britain during the late 1770s. She placed advertisements in the *Birmingham Gazette*, *Leicester & Nottingham Journal* and *Bristol Journal*.

<sup>42</sup> For example, in 1791 three portrait painters in miniature advertised in the *Caledonian Mercury*, Miss Millar on 10/1/91 was followed by Mr Percy on 4/4/91, next came S. Houghton 30/6/91 and finally Mr Percy advertised again on 29/10/91.



the English provincial papers surveyed it also appears that competitive advertising was not resorted to in the late eighteenth century.

However, the advertising columns do reveal something of the highly competitive market that lay behind a facade of uniqueness, low cost and speed of execution promoted in the copy. In September 1786, M. Lightfoot announced that she would soon be arriving in Edinburgh from Glasgow, and that specimens of her work could be viewed at Mr Creech's in the High Street.<sup>43</sup> A few weeks later, on 7 October, J. Miers, miniature profile painter, announced his arrival from Leeds in a standard fashion, to which he added the following revealing paragraph. 'Mr Miers is sorry to observe since his arrival in town, that a certain competitor has exhibited profiles of his, as her own performances, and has thus attempted to recommend her self to the public.'<sup>44</sup> This polite notice was followed by one on 18 October in which he made explicit the subject of his accusations – that Lightfoot was claiming Miers's work as her own (perhaps we can speculate that this was because Lightfoot had failed, as requested to remove her name from those pictures Miers claimed were his own).

In this second advertisement, his availability as an artist was secondary to the notification of the deception carried out by his rival. Miers explained to the public that he had lodged with Lightfoot's mother in Liverpool for eight weeks in 1785 and that at this time Lightfoot was not taking likenesses, while he, Miers, had invented his own particular method six years previously. Further evidence of Lightfoot's deception was then laid before the public - Lightfoot had advertised herself in Glasgow in the same words Miers had used in Liverpool and had exhibited several of his profiles as her own.

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<sup>43</sup> CM 18/9/86. Foskett records M. Lightfoot (fl. 1785-1786) as having worked in Edinburgh, Leeds and Glasgow, and that she assisted J. Miers prior to 1785.

<sup>44</sup> CM 7/10/86. Foskett states J. Miers (fl. 1760-1810), was a profile painter and jeweller known for his silhouettes. His main residence was 111 The Strand, London but he is known to have worked in Manchester and Newcastle. There is a set of silhouettes executed in ink and chalk from his time in Leeds, c1784/85, in the Temple Newson Collection, Leeds City Art Gallery.

Miers then appealed to the public to make their own judgement by comparing her real performances with his.<sup>45</sup> The accused, Lightfoot, placed another advertisement in the *Caledonian Mercury* only a week later, but made no attempt to refute Miers's accusations, making no allusion to the other artist or the controversy at all.<sup>46</sup> In ignoring these accusations Lightfoot, it could be argued, was distancing herself from an impolite public quarrel. However she did not advertise in this paper again, and Miers continued to do so in 1787 and 1788.<sup>47</sup>

Advertisements in the *Caledonian Mercury* indicate that miniaturists proliferated noticeably in the late 1770s. Their copy encouraged sitters through four main selling points: the uniqueness of their method, a short time of sitting, price, and the various precious settings within which portraits could be accommodated. Mrs Collins from Bond Street, London advertised her arrival to the ladies and gentlemen of Edinburgh at the end of 1783, she offered them the opportunity of obtaining 'Elegant and Striking Likenesses' of themselves and their family. Portraits would be drawn in 'Italian Aquatinta' that would never fade. The cost of a picture set in a burnished gilt frame was three Crowns and would be taken in only one sitting. The uniqueness of her method was further enhanced by royal association, she made claim to His Majesty's Patent for this 'curious and elegant invention'. She stressed that she would not remain long in Edinburgh and that specimens of her work could be seen between 11 and 3pm.<sup>48</sup>

In its content this example epitomizes advertisements placed by painters in miniature in the *Caledonian Mercury* and it also employs language characteristic of art related advertising in general. The phrase 'striking likenesses' and the use of the word

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<sup>45</sup> CM 18/10/86.

<sup>46</sup> CM 25/10/86.

<sup>47</sup> CM 24/5/87, 24/11/87, 6/12/87, 21/1/88 & 5/6/88. It seems likely that Miers was also in Edinburgh in years previous to, and later than this. SRO GD150/3322, Charles Watson of Soughton paid Miers £1: 6: 6 in 1780 for three profiles, and SRO GD44/sec53/box 35 the Duchess of Gordon paid £13: 6: 6 in 1788 also for profiles.

'curious' are terms which again advance the picture's appeal to uniqueness and which are found in many examples nationwide. It is possible to realize the importance of these terms to the consumer and to the artist in distinguishing their work from that of others, if the manner in which Mrs Collins developed her advertising campaign in the early 1780s is considered. In early March Mrs Collins announced that she had moved lodgings, almost exactly a month later she again advertised this change of address and thanked the public for their support.<sup>49</sup> In May she changed tactic. Her campaign no longer relied upon standard methods of conveying uniqueness (particular drawing techniques and devices) as she announced to the public that she would draw the audience attending *Love a la Mode* at the theatre on 3 May. As if that method of taking portraits was not unique enough, she added that it would be the first occasion she was to attempt it on stage.<sup>50</sup>

Both the language employed and the general form of advertisements placed by artists were common to the *Caledonian Mercury* and the English provincial press. As the advertisers were frequently itinerant or engaged in longer-term visits, this consistency is not surprising. One may observe within advertisements a persistent concern with brevity of sitting, ability to produce a strong likeness, some unique feature in the art, varieties of setting and price.<sup>51</sup> A typical, if expensive, example is an advertisement placed by Joseph Salkend who visited Edinburgh from London in February and March 1778. It announced that he 'took the most striking likenesses at

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<sup>48</sup> CM 22/12/83.

<sup>49</sup> Moving lodgings within a town or city seems to have been a fairly frequent occurrence for itinerant artists. This may have simply have been a matter of personal choice, but it may also have some commercial motivation. Artists may have been moving to more fashionable areas, local information unknown to them before their arrival, or in large cities it may have been a way to attract new clients resident in other areas of the city.

<sup>50</sup> CM 22/12/83, 3/3/84, 3/4/84 & 1/5/84.

<sup>51</sup> The only reference to a painter in miniature found in the *Newcastle Courant* (henceforth NC) is that of 23/3/76. Robert Askew, a painter, enameller and hired servant, was reported as having deserted. His employer was Mr Paul Jackson, and Askew was employed at his factory on Gateshead Common. Unfortunately there is no indication of what the factory produced.

two sittings of about twenty minutes each, for Bracelets, Locketts, and Rings price Two Guineas each picture.<sup>52</sup> J. Taylor, advertising in Bath in 1780, took miniature profiles in black and white and stressed to potential patrons that sittings took only a few minutes.<sup>53</sup> Mr Rymsdyk, a miniature portrait painter advertising in the *Ipswich Journal* in 1785 offered portraits in 'a fashionably handsome Square Size' price two and a half guineas each, or portraits in oval at half a guinea.<sup>54</sup> In October of the same year a Mr Rymsdyk (presumably the same artist) advertised in the *Derby Mercury*.<sup>55</sup> This advertisement is quite different to that placed in the Ipswich paper, and given the probability that these artists are one and the same, it may be implied that the variation in form was due to a perceived difference in readership. While Rymsdyk advertised only once in Ipswich, in Derby the same advertisement appeared twice, once in October and once in November. In Ipswich his emphasis had been on fashion, in Derby it was on quality, as witnessed by the following phrases - 'Strong likenesses of all Ages, accurately drawn with Ease and Elegance' and 'Pictures highly finished'; but the price of one guinea remained the same.<sup>56</sup> A language of art and taste that was national in its meaning can be witnessed in these advertisements, although given the example of Rymsdyk it is possible that within this vocabulary, terms may have been selected to appeal at a local level.

<sup>52</sup> *CM* 21/2/78 also 16/3/78.

<sup>53</sup> *Bath Journal*, henceforth *BJ*, 3/4/75. Foskett states that J. Taylor (1739-1838) was a pupil of Francis Hayman, and studied at the St Martin's Lane Academy. He exhibited at the Society of Artists, the Free Society of Artists, the Royal Academy and the British Institution. He was elected F.S.A. in 1772 and Director in 1775. He painted miniatures, some on enamel, executed black lead portraits, oil paintings and chalk drawings. He was in Oxford 1767-c1771, Bristol in 1775 and Manchester in 1777.

<sup>54</sup> *Ipswich Journal*, henceforth *IJ*, 4/6/85.

<sup>55</sup> Foskett records two artists of this name, Jan Van Rymsdyk (fl. 1758-1778) and his son Andrew (or Andreas Van) Rymsdyk (d.1786). Andrew exhibited at the Society of artists 1769 and 1776, and at the Royal Academy 1775 and 1778. Foskett is unsure whether the artist who placed advertisements in Norwich and Chester papers in 1781 and 1783 was Jan or Andrew, however, given the dates of these advertisements it would appear more likely to have been Andrew. It is also probable that it was Andrew who advertised in the *Ipswich Journal* in 1785.

<sup>56</sup> *Derby Mercury*, henceforth *DM*, 13/10/85 & 24/11/85.

In Edinburgh, at least two artists advertised themselves annually from the late 1770s onwards. In most of the provincial newspapers surveyed the number of artists advertising was fewer and the frequency of advertising lower, although until the late 1770s the *Ipswich Journal* exhibited a similar degree of art related advertising to the *Caledonian Mercury* (two advertisements for popular artists appeared in 1755, but none in 1750, 1760, 1766 and 1770).<sup>57</sup> In the *Derby Mercury* of 1750, 1755, 1760, 1765, 1770, 1775 and 1780 no artists can be found advertising, and the *Newcastle Courant* carried no advertisements for popular artists. To some extent this variation may be accounted for in terms of differences in urban population, and the variations in the circulation of the newspapers themselves. However, a third and important factor, the relative strength of the art market relative to population, is undoubtedly present. Unfortunately, due to the problems in any numerical analysis of these sets of data, outlined above, one can only reach tentative conclusions about the strength of art markets.

These similarities and differences should also be seen within the context of the relative strength of these newspapers to attract advertisers. The *Ipswich Journal*, which falls within the same highly successful first category as the *Caledonian Mercury*, does display a similar profile until the late 1770s, although so too does the *Bath Journal* which attracted far fewer advertisers in general. Both the *Newcastle Courant* and the *Derby Mercury* carried relatively very few advertisements, and this is reflected in the numbers of artists advertising, only one and two respectively in the editions surveyed.<sup>58</sup>

From the late 1770s onwards a comparable number of artists can be found advertising in the *Bath Journal* each year as in the columns of the Edinburgh press, thus indicating a similarly buoyant market for small scale, relatively inexpensive portraits.

<sup>57</sup> *IJ* 5/7/55, 9/8/55 & 27/5/75. As 1765 exists in only a very incomplete form, 1766 was surveyed instead.

This is perhaps not surprising given that Edinburgh was a capital with a static prosperous population and Bath a resort attracting comparatively wealthy visitors. At Bath in 1775 Mr Hall offered to draw likenesses in black pencil, and J. Taylor advertised miniature profiles.<sup>59</sup> In 1780 A. Polack, an artist from The Hague, was drawing likenesses in miniature, as was Master Lawrence (possibly the young Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830)) who described his sketches as 'Striking.'<sup>60</sup> Given the relative abilities of these two newspapers to attract advertisements, the *Caledonian Mercury* being much more successful than the *Bath Journal* in so doing, the market for miniature portraits in Bath was arguably stronger than that in Edinburgh, a conclusion confirmed by the fact that at least one hundred and sixty artists, of whom at least half were miniaturists, spent some time working in Bath during the eighteenth century.<sup>61</sup>

In addition to those advertisements placed by itinerant and relatively low status artists, advertising by painters in oil may also be found in the English provincial press. As in the Edinburgh papers this was infrequent and demonstrates the contrast between fine artists and those engaged in more popular and affordable portrait images, the former not desirous of being associated with commercialism. This survey did not find any advertisements placed by fine artists in the *Derby Mercury*. But in the *Ipswich Journal* in 1775 'A Lady who has been under the tuition of that eminent master Sir Joshua Reynolds' offered to paint portraits in oils, and announced her intentions to 'stay [in Ipswich] and practise that Polite art.'<sup>62</sup> The *Newcastle Courant* carried an advertisement placed by Joshua Bell in 1776, informing friends that he had moved and was ready to

<sup>58</sup> *DM* 13/10/85 & 8/4/90.

<sup>59</sup> *BJ* 6/1/75 & 3/4/75. Foskett lists a John Hall (1739-1797), but no definite identification can be made.

<sup>60</sup> *BJ* 13/3/80 & 4/12/80. Again no positive identification can be made for A. Polack, although Foskett lists a Solomon Polack (1757-1839) from The Hague who exhibited at the Royal Academy and Society of Artists 1790-1835. His son, who painted miniatures is given as J. S. Polack.

<sup>61</sup> Susan Legoux Sloman, 'Artists' Picture Rooms in Eighteenth-Century Bath.' *Bath History*, Vol. VI, 1996, pp. 132-154, esp. pp. 132-4.

<sup>62</sup> *IJ* 27/5/75.

receive and execute orders.<sup>63</sup> Advertisements for fine artists were therefore very rare, and appear for a variety of largely unconnected reasons with no apparent pattern or coherence. It would appear that the majority of fine artists moving to a new part of the country did not advertise. Only practical changes of relevance to those already patronising them are announced - changes of address, or business arrangements.<sup>64</sup>

However, one way in which fine artists did advertise, and encourage patronage through personal and hence socially respectable channels, was as drawing masters.<sup>65</sup> The *Caledonian Mercury* carried more advertisements for drawing masters and their academies than for artists in general. In the *Bath Journal* too can be found a number of advertisements for drawing masters, but it is surprising to note that the editions of the other provincial papers surveyed did not reveal any such advertisements.<sup>66</sup>

Further differences in the level of advertising in Edinburgh and elsewhere can be found in the frequency with which individuals placed advertisements, both over a number of years, and within a restricted time span (the latter implying a form of campaign). In the two major centres for drawing masters, Bath and Edinburgh, a considerable difference is noticeable. In the *Bath Journal*, none of the drawing masters who advertised did so more than once in a year, nor did the same master appear across a number of years, thus implying frequent changes in drawing masters seeking pupils in

<sup>63</sup> NC 3/2/76. Joshua Bell may be identical to, or a relative of, William (or Joseph) Bell (1735-?1806), a native of Newcastle and one of the first students of the Royal Academy who returned to Newcastle possibly in the late 1770s.

<sup>64</sup> Examples of announcements regarding business arrangements are 1/ 9/8/55 - Joshua Kirby announced that he was moving to London and his business would be continued, by his partner, Andrew Baldry. CM 11/2/67 - Alexander Runciman announced that he would travel to Italy, and that his practice in ornamental painting would be continued under Donald McLaurin.

<sup>65</sup> For amateur artists and their drawing masters see Kim Sloan 'Industry from Idleness? The Rise of the amateur in the Eighteenth Century' in Michael Rosenthal, Christiana Payne, and Scott Wilcox (eds.), *Prospects for the Nation: Recent Essays in British Landscape, 1750-1880*, London, 1997, pp.285-305. Sloan's research has revealed that from c1690 to 1800 approximately 350 artists or drawing masters offered lessons, and approximately one hundred were active before 1770, p.289.

<sup>66</sup> In the 1790s it was not uncommon for four or five advertisements to appear for drawing masters, and this number does not include obvious repeat advertisements placed within a short period, something which happened quite frequently in advertisements of this type. In Bath the advertisements remain fairly

the city. This is in contrast to the *Caledonian Mercury*, where drawing masters appear to have advertised frequently and over a long period of time implying both competition and an established market. The relatively large numbers of such advertisements in Edinburgh between 1750 and 1800 can be partly explained by the presence of the Trustees' Academy in the city. As a form of charitable institution which offered free tuition to students wishing to pursue useful trades in which drawing was a requisite skill, the academy and the terms under which it operated was advertised from 1764. At this time William Delacour was master, and advertised his own private classes alongside the Trustees' Academy advertisement.<sup>67</sup> However, it was not until 1786 under the direction of David Allan that the Trustees' Academy and Allan's private classes came to be advertised annually.<sup>68</sup>

Through the 1750s and 1760s only occasional advertisements for drawing masters appeared, and many of these are not typical of later advertisements. In 1753 the Foulis Academy in Glasgow advertised its opening with a long and detailed announcement, and two advertisements appeared for the Trustees' Academy in the 1760s. In 1756 the artist Charles Laimé promoted his services as a drawing master and in 1771 Alexander Fyfe was apparently the next to do so in a private capacity.<sup>69</sup>

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infrequent even in the 1790s, advertisements for various drawing masters and mistresses were placed in the *BJ* 1/10/50, 19/2/70, 3/1/91, 9/3/95 & 27/11/00.

<sup>67</sup> *CM* 14/7/64. Delacour was master between its foundation in 1760 and 1767.

<sup>68</sup> Allan generally advertised in November, coinciding with the opening of the academy. There are omissions in this annual appearance which may be accounted for by human error in locating them, the unavailability of certain additions of the paper, or it may be that Allan did not advertise. Allan's first advertisement appears on 11/11/86 and advertisements have been located around that date in 1787, 1788, 1789, 1790, 1793, 1794, and 1795. Allan was master of the academy from 1786 until his death in 1796. It appears that neither of his two predecessors Charles Pavillon (1768-72) or Alexander Runciman (1772-1785) utilised newspaper advertising to attract pupils, public or private. Although after the death of Delacour, it was advertised that the Trustees' Academy would continue under Charles Pavillon the advertisement was not placed by Pavillon but by the Trustees' office, *CM* 25/3/69.

<sup>69</sup> *CM* 5/11/53, 14/7/64, 25/3/69, 11/5/56 & 2/10/71.



George Walker, who described himself as both limner and drawing master, first advertised his classes in 1779.<sup>70</sup> In 1789 a George Walker, advertising his drawing academy opposite the Royal Exchange, noted the presence in Edinburgh of another drawing master of the same name.<sup>71</sup> Whether this was an attempt to profit from the established name of another or a genuine coincidence cannot be deduced. But it is evident that the advertiser was the same George Walker who had advertised in 1779, and who maintained a persistent presence in the advertising columns of the *Caledonian Mercury* for the next ten years.<sup>72</sup>

Walker's advertisements appeared at intervals during the year, announcing either that his classes were about to begin or that he had moved. There does not appear to be any particular consistency in the intervals between advertisements, but they are often to be found in October or November and January or February to coincide with the winter season, and around about June to coincide with the start of summer drawing classes.<sup>73</sup> David Allan's advertisements for the Trustees' Academy appear annually in November, as he was possibly obliged to seek publicly students for these free classes. Allan was apparently one of Walker's most important competitors, another was Alexander Nasmyth who advertised less frequently than Walker or Allan, but at dates very similar to the latter.<sup>74</sup> Both Allan and Nasmyth enjoyed much higher reputations than Walker in

<sup>70</sup> *CM* 27/11/79.

<sup>71</sup> *CM* 24/1/89.

<sup>72</sup> This can be deduced from the frequent changes of address he announced. An advertisement placed in the *CM* 21/6/88, stated that Mr Walker had moved from the Netherbow to the West side of South Bridge Street, no 5. The advertisement of 24/1/89, which alerts the readers to the presence of another drawing master named Walker, gives an address opposite the Royal Exchange, a position that accords with the west side of South Bridge Street. Mr Walker's moves can be traced until 1788 as he gives both his old and new addresses.

<sup>73</sup> Advertisements for Walker were placed in the *Caledonian Mercury* on 27/11/79, 28/2/80, 8/7/80, 9/12/80, 3/6/84, 20/11/84, 18/11/86, 21/6/88 and so on until 1/11/97.

<sup>74</sup> See for example Nasmyth – *CM* 17/10/89, Allan – *CM* 12/11/89, Nasmyth – *CM* 11/11/90, Allan – *CM* 11/11/90. Brookes, p.128, notes that the painters Alexander Nasmyth, David Erskine, John Brown and John Donaldson, the draughtsman John Baine and the drawing master George Walker were all considered by the Board of the Trustees' Academy as candidates to replace Alexander Runciman as master; the position was given to David Allan.

general; Nasmyth, and eventually his children, ran the most successful and fashionable drawing classes in Edinburgh from the 1790s until well into the nineteenth century.<sup>75</sup>

The regular and consistent placing of advertisements by drawing masters points to their having to compete for students.<sup>76</sup> The numbers of drawing masters who advertised may indicate that demand was extremely high, a point that, significantly, cannot be inferred from English provincial papers over this period. We might tentatively conclude that while there was undoubtedly a growing nation-wide interest in sketching, it seems to have enjoyed particular popularity in Edinburgh.

The number of advertisements placed by Walker and the range of services he offered increased steadily from his first announcement in the late 1770s. In 1779 Walker's advertisement announced that he 'continues to teach drawing in its several branches, viz. Landscape, Heads, Fruit, and Flowers, in Chalks, Crayons, Indian Ink, or Water Colours.' Public classes were held between eleven and two, and private tuition was available in the homes of young ladies and gentlemen.<sup>77</sup> In December 1780 Walker put a different spin on his advertisements in order to attract a new type of student. He promoted the art of drawing, appealing to the public through the use of genteel conventions, 'The Utility and pleasure derived from these elegant branches of genteel education are obvious- To youths intended for the army or navy-its many advantages in

<sup>75</sup> For an account of the Nasmyth's drawing academy see Francina Irwin, 'Lady Amateurs and their Masters in Scott's Edinburgh', *Connoisseur*, vol. 187, December 1974, pp.230-237.

<sup>76</sup> J. Wood and Mrs Schetky also advertised. J. Wood advertised in the *Caledonian Mercury* on 26/12/93, 23/10/94, 1/10/96 and 14/10/97, and on 27/10/98 as master of the Trustees' Academy. Mrs Schetky advertised in the same paper on 3/6/80, and although no other advertisements were noted as placed by her, Irwin (1974), p.233, states that Mrs Schetky held drawing classes for young ladies in the early 1790s. After her death in 1795 they were continued under her son John Christian Schetky whose pupils included the daughters of Lady Balcarres. J.C. Schetky later became Marine Painter in Ordinary to George IV. Other drawing teachers mentioned in the *CM* are Archibald Rutherford 11/3/80 (his death), Mr Mercier 11/12/80, 17/12/81 - in which he indicated that he had lowered his prices as they were too high - this is perhaps another indication of considerable competition, and 22/7/82. W.B. Michel, 15/12/84; T. Pether 26/11/89; Miss Millar, 5/4/90; Mr Vaughan, 29/11/94; Miss Archdeacon, 19/11/95 & 10/2/98; P.Marshall, 27/11/97; Mrs Cummins, 9/6/98 & 9/10/00 and George Bruce, 24/7/98.

<sup>77</sup> *CM* 27/11/79.

these departments need not be enumerated.<sup>78</sup> This must have proved an attractive option to those considering naval and military careers, as in 1784 Walker was also offering classes in fortification and perspective.<sup>79</sup> In 1789 he gave the first indication of his charges, one guinea a quarter for public classes.<sup>80</sup> Additional classes were again proposed in January 1793, this time appealing to the upper end of the market. Unable to accommodate the number of young ladies requiring private tuition, he proposed holding a private class for no more than six to eight ladies, the charge to be one and a half guineas a quarter.<sup>81</sup>

In 1794 Walker again tried to broaden the appeal of his tuition by offering two additional classes for the gentlemen of the University. The classes were to meet three times a week, one commencing at 7am (for landscape), the other at 6.45 for 'the gentlemen who mean to attend the botanical class', and was specifically to study the delineation and colouring of flowers and plants.<sup>82</sup> Continuing to expand his services throughout the 1790s Walker also advertised in 1797 a large collection of drawings for use by his students.<sup>83</sup> This is yet another demonstration of his determination to differentiate his services, to provide a more complete and accommodating class type and time, probably in competition with his rivals, particularly David Allan who enjoyed an enhanced status as both a history painter and Master of the Trustees' Academy.

The popularity of drawing classes is further evidence of the growing interest in the fine arts in Edinburgh, and its burgeoning market is also evidenced by the

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<sup>78</sup> *CM* 9/12/80.

<sup>79</sup> *CM* 3/6/84. From the seventeenth century young men were encouraged to draw not only as in the past as an accomplishment, but also because of drawing's practical use in war and whilst travelling. In the eighteenth century most young men learned a technical form of drawing. See Sloan, pp.288 & 290.

<sup>80</sup> *CM* 24/1/89. In May 1790 two additional classes were announced, one at 7am and one at 12 noon, *CM* 14/5/90.

<sup>81</sup> *CM* 19/1/93.

<sup>82</sup> *CM* 22/3/94. It is not specified in the advertisement whether the 6.45 class was held in the morning or evening. However, as it is given following the specified morning class at 7, it is likely that 6.45 referred to the evening.

<sup>83</sup> *CM* 4/11/97.

advertisements that appeared for the sale of prints and pictures. These advertisements were placed by booksellers, print sellers and auctioneers offering specialist art sales. Sales of prints and paintings in Edinburgh remained, for most of this period, quite separate; paintings were sold at auction and prints through booksellers and specialist print sellers. It also appears that dealers promoted themselves as either print sellers or dealers in pictures, although it is probable that a certain amount of crossover in selling occurred.

Artists and drawing masters could to a large extent rely upon their reputation, personal recommendations, social contacts, fashion and simple word of mouth to promote themselves. Merchants and retailers, in the dramatically expanding city of Edinburgh, had to find public means of promoting the services they offered. For long established trades or companies reputation and an established location reduced the need for public advertising. But the art market was both expanding and developing, necessitating alterations to the way art was sold and the seller promoted. Fine prints and paintings, which can be defined as luxury goods, were appealing to an ever increasing and broadening social base.<sup>84</sup> The introduction of new consumers, who could be guided in their taste and introduced to new means of purchasing works of art, enabled and necessitated alterations in the means through which pictures and prints might be acquired.

Most art sales advertised in the *Caledonian Mercury* were concerned with prints, of which a significant number were offered as subscriptions.<sup>85</sup> While there is considerable variation in the numbers of such advertisements, their numbers, taken

<sup>84</sup> Hogarth attempted to appeal to the lower end of the market through his series *Industry and Idleness* (1747) and *The Four Stages of Cruelty* (1751).

<sup>85</sup> For example an engraving by Alexander Baillie after Imperiali was offered for subscription in the *CM* 30/7/64. Other examples of prints offered by subscription appeared in the *CM* on 7/1/55, 26/2/56, 28/1/1760, 15/8/63, 16/7/81, 24/4/84, 21/5/87, 27/8/88 and 5/5/90.

annually, are significant from the beginning of this survey, 1750, onwards.<sup>86</sup> This accords with the marked growth in the print market in general between 1730 and 1770.<sup>87</sup> In the advertising of prints significant peaks and troughs of activity are clearly marked, with for example six advertisements placed in 1767, and in the following year only one. By the late 1770s this variation had evened out and there appeared consistently and annually six or more advertisements until the end of the century. The general economic situation of the country must lie at the heart of any explanations changes in the market.

In the 1750s the print market appears to have been dominated by a small number of agents: Hamilton and Balfour (booksellers) and Charles Esplin (a specialist print seller) are the names which appear most frequently in newspaper columns. By the 1760s these two firms were joined by a number of engravers who both published and sold prints. In 1764 Alexander Baillie offered, by subscription, two prints after *Imperiali*, the prints were available both directly from him and from Mr Esplin's print shop at the head of Anchor Close, at 7s 6d or 7s to subscribers. These images were of local as well as international interest, for Baillie's engravings were made after paintings in the collection of a prominent local family, the Clerks of Penicuik. Their 'readiness' was announced in early 1765 with the additional note that other prints were also available.<sup>88</sup> Charles Phinn was another engraver who also sold prints, but appears to have had a different interest to Baillie. Baillie's advertisements were for historical and religious prints after old masters, in particular *Imperiali*, while Phinn, whose engraving skills were employed for maps, advertisements, plans of estates, entails for Courts of Session and coats of arms, also sold contemporary portrait prints. In 1762 he offered for sale portrait prints of the King and Queen at five shillings each, and other portraits of the

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<sup>86</sup> For most of the 1750s and 1760s an average figure is two or three.

<sup>87</sup> Clayton, p.105.

<sup>88</sup> *CM* 30/7/64 and 9/2/65.

Duke of York, Prince Ferdinand, the Marquis of Granby, Commodore Keppel and other royalty, politicians and heroes.<sup>89</sup> The subjects of these prints are expressive of a British national identity, from the head of state to Britain's military heroes, although it is interesting that other aspects of Phinn's business, concerned as it was with mapping, order and governance, may also have been related to expressions of a cohesive state.

In the advertising columns of the *Caledonian Mercury* it was not uncommon to find the names of local artists and engravers promoting engravings by them, or after them, of contemporary subject matter. An engraving by Richard Earlom, after George Chalmer's portrait of *Dr George Gregory*, was advertised in 1774. In 1781 prints (published in London) after James Wales's *Views of Leith* were offered for subscription. Mr Mercier publicized his *Six Views of Edinburgh* in 1782 and a portrait of *Henry Erskine* by Raeburn, to be engraved by Wood of London, was offered for subscription in 1797.<sup>90</sup> The number of advertised print subscriptions or direct sales was not large, at most one a year. This paucity of advertising is probably deceptive: Bushnell's *A Dictionary of Scottish Engravers of the Eighteenth Century* indicates that there were over fifty engravers working in Edinburgh during the period 1750-1800, and the difference in numbers can probably be explained by the printsellers having effectively a captive audience for whom a visit was part of the social round.<sup>91</sup>

Advertisements for prints produced locally, or which had a local connection, were similarly scarce in the English provincial newspapers. In Ipswich the engraver J. Kendall, who also owned an important print shop in the region, produced a small number of prints published by subscription. Both prints and advertisements are of particular

<sup>89</sup> CM 11/1/62. For the popular fashion for collecting illustrious heads in relation to national identity see chapter three of this dissertation.

<sup>90</sup> CM 3/9/74, 16/7/81, 22/7/82 & 6/7/97.

<sup>91</sup> George Bushnell 'A Dictionary of Scottish Engravers of the Eighteenth Century' *Print Collector's Quarterly*, July, 1929, pp.251-267, and supplement to the above *Print Collector's Quarterly*, July 1931, pp.288-296. No more up to date examination of print making in eighteenth-century Scotland exists.

interest as they are of local subject matter, but in the visual language of the paintings and the written language of the advertisements they reflect images and concepts of national concern.<sup>92</sup> Aside from Kendall, subjects of local interest may be found in the publication of prints after Joshua Kirby's (1716-1774) *Perspective Views of Suffolk* in 1785. These prints were advertised by R. Loder (bookseller) thirty years after Kirby had announced his departure for London in the same newspaper and eleven years after his death, indicating that Loder was still able to capitalize on the metropolitan success of a local artist and his considerable local reputation even after he had departed both his place of birth and the world.<sup>93</sup>

The *Bath Journal* advertised significant numbers of prints by local artists and engravers of local subject matter; local architectural and landscape subjects appear to have been a standard of local publishing. A typical subject was *Perspective Views of the Abbey Church*, published in 1750 and advertised in the *Bath Journal*. Designed by Vertue of Bath and engraved by Vertue of London these prints benefited from the reputation of a London artist and the connections of a local one.<sup>94</sup> The significance of the prints marketed in the Bath press is that the majority were of local interest; only in the early 1750s did the *Bath Journal* carry a general advertisement for French and Dutch prints. This situation was undoubtedly related to the seasonal clientele who would have dominated the market in this fashionable resort, for they could acquire a greater variety of prints in London with the Bath prints representing souvenirs.<sup>95</sup>

The presence of local engravers producing work of specific local interest in provincial towns and cities is significant. In comparative terms this market would seem

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<sup>92</sup> *IJ* 27/7/80, 30/9/80, 21/10/80, 9/4/85, 23/7/85 and 23/7/85.

<sup>93</sup> *IJ* 22/10/85 and 9/8/55. Kirby worked in East Anglia before moving to London in 1755. For Kirby see Felicity Owen 'Joshua Kirby (1716-74): a biographical sketch' in *Gainsborough's House Review*, 1995/96, pp.61-75.

<sup>94</sup> *BJ* 29/1/50.

<sup>95</sup> *BJ* 29/1/50.

most vibrant in Bath and Edinburgh where there is also evidence that visits to print rooms and artists' studios formed part of fashionable entertainment and, as we noted earlier, fine artists were also producing work of local interest.<sup>96</sup> It also appears to have been important for advertisers to make known, and exploit, any local connections attached to works engraved, as with Baillie's advertisement of prints after works by Imperiali at Penicuik House (near Edinburgh), or an advertisement of 1780 in the *Ipswich Journal* for an engraving after a portrait by Carlo Maratti of *Clement IX*. Sold by J. Kendall in Bury, this advertisement pointed out that the portrait had unfortunately left Houghton, that it was now lost from local view.<sup>97</sup> Situated in Norfolk, Houghton Hall was built for Sir Robert Walpole in 1722, and would have undoubtedly been known to the readers of the *Ipswich Journal*, and certain sectors of its readership would have undoubtedly visited the house as tourists or guests.<sup>98</sup>

An indication of the national distribution of images, which most often originated in London, is given by the advertisements found in provincial newspapers for London publishers, which indicate that their prints were available through named local agents. Clayton has argued that provincial publications rarely carried announcements of London publications as, by 1750, London newspapers were distributed sufficiently widely in the provinces to serve as the normal advertising medium for prints.<sup>99</sup> However, within the context of the generally low density of art-related advertising in English provincial newspapers, local print sellers not infrequently advertised prints specified as by London artists or from London dealers, and the Edinburgh based *Caledonian Mercury* carried

<sup>96</sup> For Bath see Trevor Fawcett, *Bath Entertain'd. Amusements, Recreations and Gambling at the 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Spa*, Bath, 1998, *passim* and Sloman (1996), pp.132-154. For Edinburgh see *The Diary of Sylls Neville. 1767-1788*, ed. Basil Cozens-Hardy, London, 1950, p.192. The contents of this diary are discussed below.

<sup>97</sup> *IJ* 22/7/80. The collection to which this painting belonged had been sold to Catherine the Great.

<sup>98</sup> Houghton was an important stop off on the country house tour. A guide book was published in 1752 detailing the picture collection. See Moir, pp.58-76.

<sup>99</sup> Clayton, p.119



frequent advertisements for prints.<sup>100</sup> In 1780 the *Derby Mercury* advertised a collection of Boydell's prints, the very popular series *A Companion to Adultery*, and a decade later an engraving of Louis XIV, a very popular subject in the 1790s.<sup>101</sup> However, a far better idea of national interest in a print or image may be exemplified by an advertisement that appeared in the *Ipswich Journal* in August 1800. The advertisement announced that J. Brasby, a bookseller in Cornhill, Ipswich, was taking subscriptions for a print engraved by Bartolozzi 'commemorating the Preservation of His Majesty's life.' This information was contained within a letter attached to which was a list of subscribers - aldermen and council men from Liverpool.<sup>102</sup> The same advertisement, with appropriate local amendments, had appeared previously in the *Newcastle Courant* in July and August 1800.<sup>103</sup> The presence of named subscribers from Liverpool in the advertisement is significant, as it may indicate a provincial initiative to employ a London based artist in producing a print for national consumption.

The advertisements which appear in the *Caledonian Mercury* throughout the 1750s and 60s are almost always for specific prints with general advertisements exceptional. The prints themselves were predominantly religious and historical, after old masters, and we may additionally deduce from them that commercial arrangements existed between print sellers and engravers. For example, Charles Esplin appears to have enjoyed an almost exclusive arrangement (in Edinburgh) with the famous engraver Robert Strange (1725-1792), for the numerous advertisements placed by Esplin throughout the 1750s and 60s are almost entirely for works by Strange, after old masters. Typically these advertisements named the artist, the painting, and collection to which it belonged. These prints were advertised for subscription but were available at Esplin's

<sup>100</sup> For example in 1769 T. Philipe advertised new prints after Gainsborough, Reynolds and Wright, *CM* 4/3/69.

<sup>101</sup> *DM* 7/7/80, 1/9/80 and 9/11/95.

<sup>102</sup> *IJ* 30/7/00.

shop after publication, although at a higher price. A rider placed at the end of all Esplin's advertisements for Robert Strange's prints stated that, 'all Mr Strange's works, framed and glazed, and a variety of other prints, could be had.'<sup>104</sup> No other outlet was indicated for these prints, and no other print seller or bookseller advertised the work of Robert Strange, a man with strong local connections, and the highest international reputation.<sup>105</sup> This would seem to indicate an exclusive arrangement between the engraver and print seller.

A letter to an unknown correspondent from Strange in London dated 13 May 1760 may be to Esplin. It certainly addresses a fellow Scot dealing in his prints, as is demonstrated by the phrase 'a proposal was made to me by our country man Ramsay.' The letter provides a useful insight into the business dealings of Strange, warranting substantial citation.

I had the favour of your letter inclosing [sic.] a State of our affairs exclusive of the last Cargo of my new prints I sent you, I was in general agreably [sic.] surprised at their Success as indeed of things in general. I have sent by last Tuesday's Coach a Box containing 49 Sets of the two Carlo Maratti's I have lately published; you'll observe nine of them are intended as presents... Let John McGowan have one of your number for Mr Cooper & you will then only be accountable for 39 sets. They are sold for 12 sh[illings] the pair... I flatter myself that in our little dealings together we are mutually satisfied with each other – for the future I will add five per cent to the allowance you have hitherto had which will in all make 20 per cent. I include in this addition the two last prints I have sent you. However soon you have collected your scatter'd arrears for the Venus &c youll [sic] at your leisure remit it to me as I am now to embark on an expensive expedition.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>103</sup> NC 26/7/00 and 2/8/00.

<sup>104</sup> For example CM 19/4/59. Clayton, p.54, explains that 'the income from subscription sales went entirely to the artist, whereas a printseller was allowed a wholesale discount of 25% or more for sales made in his shop. Since the artist received a higher proportion of the price he could afford to offer a discount to subscribers, and this became standard practice.'

<sup>105</sup> For Robert Strange see Clayton, pp.115 & 174. Strange studied in Edinburgh under Richard Cooper and in addition to his work as an engraver he imported and sold paintings and prints, he lived mainly in England or abroad. He was the outstanding engraver of history paintings for his generation, with an international reputation.

<sup>106</sup> NLS MS 14253, ff.2-4. Strange's 'expensive expedition' was to Paris and Italy.

The types of prints produced by Strange and the publicity Esplin used to sell them are typified by an advertisement placed by the latter in 1756. 'It is proposed to publish, by subscription, three historical prints. Julius Caesar divorcing Pompeia and receiving Calphurnia; The family of Romulus and Rhemus, both paintings by Pietro da Cortona in the collection of His Serene Highness the prince of Toulouse and thirdly, Belisarius, from the painting by Salvator Rosa in the collection of the Honourable the Lord Viscount Townsend.' The price was one guinea, of which half was to be paid on subscription and half on delivery, denoting expensive and quality prints, as befitted the subject matter and whereabouts of the originals.<sup>107</sup>

By 1767 another method of promoting the sale of prints was being utilized in the newspaper columns. Occasional advertisements would appear not for individually named prints, but a mass of prints in general.<sup>108</sup> This certainly indicates changes in marketing techniques, and possibly also in the composition of the market availability of prints of various qualities. As we have seen, most prints were publicized using the names of the painting, artist and engraver to appeal to an educated audience with knowledge of art and artists – an audience that might be impressed by the collection in which the original picture was housed and by the degree of exclusivity promised by subscription. The prints were intended to appeal to the specialist collector whose portfolio would be enhanced by the addition of these pieces, and therefore the target for these advertisements were Edinburgh's connoisseurs, or those with pretensions to be such.

This 'connoisseur' profile of the print buyer to which these advertisements appealed was not that addressed by the advertisements placed by Thomas Philipe of the Canongate, in which quantity not quality, and price rather than provenance, were the

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<sup>107</sup> CM 9/12/56.

most important factors. The change in advertising tactics is first witnessed in an edition of the *Caledonian Mercury* of April 1767, when Philipe announced that he intended to sell off his entire collection of 'curious and valuable' prints. However, here Philipe retained the use of words such as 'collection', 'curious' and 'valuable' with their connotations of connoisseurship. The naming of seventeen prints, by amongst others Bartolozzi, Smith, Vernet and Rubens, also retained elements of an appeal to this established market. However, this advertisement also explicitly presents the commercial side of print selling. Philipe declared that he intended to sell off his collection of prints entirely, and for that purpose had marked them 'lower than London prices', and many below 'prime cost.'<sup>109</sup> However, this was not a clearance sale due to a business closure. Philipe placed another advertisement in December of the same year which indicated that his stock had been increased by the arrival of parcels of prints from London and abroad. He offered 'Greater choice' and reiterated that his prints were cheaper than London prices.<sup>110</sup> It would appear that Philipe was altering the quality of his stock, appealing to an audience concerned with price. This would therefore indicate a significant change in Edinburgh's print market, and as I shall suggest was connected with a trend towards using prints as 'furniture'.

Despite the alterations Philipe made to his stock and advertising, his prints were of sufficient quality and variety as to surprise visitors from England. Syllas Neville, who resided in Edinburgh for a number of years during the 1770s, visited Philipe's print shop and was surprised by the range and quality of prints. Neville recorded in his diary that with his friend Baker and Lord Home he set out to visit David Hume, and finding that he was not at home they paid a visit to Philipe's shop. 'In our return his Ld carried us to a

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<sup>108</sup> CM 24/7/67, 21/1/69, 2/1/71, 5/4/72, 20/11/79, 15/1/80 etc.

<sup>109</sup> CM 27/4/67.

<sup>110</sup> CM 21/12/67.

picture and print shop kept by one Philips - Saw more good things than I expected to find here.'<sup>111</sup>

Neville's surprise might have been provoked by the expectations aroused by Philipe's emphasis upon quantity and a cheap price. Despite their quality these prints were not intended for the connoisseur market, as we discover when, in 1769, Philipe's copy claimed that the 'elegant assortment of English prints' just arrived would be sold as cheap as in London and would appeal to people setting up print rooms and furnishing houses.<sup>112</sup> They were therefore not intended to be part of a collector's folio of prints, but furniture.<sup>113</sup> This form of advertising indicates that the demand for prints was extremely high and that prints appealed to a large group of people who were attracted not by artists' names, but by choice and price. This phenomenon was indicated too in an advertisement in the *Caledonian Mercury* in 1772 for a 'Print Warehouse'; its very name implies that very large numbers of prints were available in this one place.<sup>114</sup>

One further important seller of prints, The Edinburgh Circulating Library, also advertised in the *Caledonian Mercury*. The Library first began to advertise prints for sale in 1780, listing the prints and their prices after supplying the reader with an extensive list of literary additions to the library. These prints, unlike the books, were not for loan but were offered for sale. Significantly, they were modern and comparatively recently published, typically after paintings by Angelica Kauffman, Joshua Reynolds and Benjamin West. The modernity of these prints is significant as until the 1780s named works after contemporary artists were rarely advertised in Edinburgh. Although many advertisements stressed the availability of prints 'both ancient and modern', advertising copy (for all its limitations) points to a far more limited interest in prints by modern

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<sup>111</sup> *The Diary of Sylls Neville*, Monday 14 December 1772, p. 192.

<sup>112</sup> *CM* 21/1/69.

<sup>113</sup> For prints rooms see Clayton p. 138.

masters, and of modern subjects until then. Contemporary and modern prints were certainly available in Edinburgh, and occasionally print sellers announced new prints by Reynolds, Gainsborough and Wright, but in general it was prints after old masters that were most frequently advertised.<sup>115</sup>

If it is assumed that advertisers had an informed sense of which prints would appeal most to potential buyers and sought to attract the attention of the public through publicizing these prints, then, at least until the 1780s, taste in Edinburgh was primarily for the works of old masters. This would fit with Clayton's conclusion that the works of the engraver Robert Strange, which were predominantly after old masters, appealed to Continental and Scottish, rather than English, taste. In 1769 Strange published a catalogue of Italian paintings he was engraving, in which he stated 'It is only by studying and meditating upon the works of the Italian masters that we can reasonably expect to form a true taste, and to defend ourselves against the sorcery of fashion.' As Clayton points out, such sentiments are the diametric opposite of those expressed by Hogarth.<sup>116</sup> Strange's popularity in Edinburgh and the overwhelming emphasis upon the works of old masters in the advertising columns of the *Caledonian Mercury*, would seem to support Clayton's assertion of a difference in taste between the English and Scots, with taste in England for the ancient coexisting with the modern, whilst the Scots remained far more conservative.<sup>117</sup>

However, it should also be remembered that Scots had direct links with the Continent and were not reliant upon London print-sellers as middlemen for imports of foreign pictures or prints, which flooded there from Holland and elsewhere. To a

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<sup>114</sup> *CM* 5/4/72. This warehouse is very interesting as in this same advertisement it announced an auction of pictures and drawings.

<sup>115</sup> *CM* 4/3/69, Thomas Philipe announced the arrival of prints after Gainsborough, Reynolds and Wright.

<sup>116</sup> Clayton, p. 174.

significant extent the English print market was reliant on Holland for prints (not all of Dutch origin) during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and Edinburgh's print market seems also to have also depended upon this important source.<sup>118</sup> Intellectual, trade and personal links between Scotland and the Low Countries were firmly established by the eighteenth century; from the seventeenth century Dutch based Scottish merchants had acted as art dealers.<sup>119</sup> The importance of prints after old masters to the Edinburgh market is undoubtedly related to this direct connection with the Continent, from where, for much of the eighteenth century, prints could be obtained as quickly as from London and without the extra expense of a London print dealer as middleman.

One of the most important developments in the way in which prints were sold in Edinburgh and London was the commercial print auction. These were auctions of prints brought together specifically for sale, and may have included prints obtained from a number of sources. Prints may have been sent directly to the auctioneer for sale or via agents, collections were sent from abroad, and an increasing number of sales resulted from the death of collectors.<sup>120</sup> The commercial sales held by Mr A. Smith, an auctioneer at the Warehouse in Princes Street, auctions held in the Large Room in Bridge Street and those held by William Martin at numerous locations in the city over fifteen years, were advertised extensively in the press.

Smith's early auctions were advertised using a similar terminology to that familiar from other print advertisements. Print auctioneers informed the public of the availability of prints 'both Ancient and Modern', and named illustrious artists and engravers, again to emphasize quality and thereby appeal to the connoisseur. The

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<sup>117</sup> Iain Pears, *The Discovery of Painting. The Growth of Interest in the Arts in England, 1680-1768*, New Haven & London, 1988, contains useful appendices detailing art imports into England. Table 3 pp.211-213 lists numbers of prints and their country of origin by date.

<sup>118</sup> Clayton, pp.25-48 & 123.

<sup>119</sup> For Scotland's artistic links with the Low Countries see Williams (1992).

<sup>120</sup> Clayton, p.126.

overwhelming emphasis in Smith's advertisements was on the quality of the prints he was to auction. For example, in April 1782 Smith advertised his last auction that season, it was to have been an auction of 'choice and valuable prints' and the eminent artists named in the advertisement included Woollett, Kauffman, Bartolozzi, Vernet, Hirare, Zeeman and Synderhoef.<sup>121</sup> However, Smith's high quality print auctions do not appear to have continued for very long, and by 1783 no further mention of Smith or his auctions can be found in the newspaper columns. Print auctions (and later those for paintings) were dominated from 1783 by William Martin, whose reputation as an auctioneer was such that he was immortalized in caricature by the Edinburgh engraver John Kay (Fig. 77).<sup>122</sup> The increase in the number of auctions advertised during the last decades of the century, almost exclusively by Martin who held seven auctions in 1789 and fourteen in 1797, demonstrates that there was an extremely large demand for prints in Edinburgh. This is reinforced by the apparent absence of any deleterious effects of this growth on more traditional outlets – the specialist print sellers and book shops.

Martin began advertising in 1783, with one sale in January and another in December.<sup>123</sup> By 1786 Martin's auctions had increased in frequency to at least four per annum and were held in auction houses in various parts of the town.<sup>124</sup> By 1789 Martin

<sup>121</sup> Smith had advertised two other print sales earlier that year. In addition to Smith's auctions, advertisements appeared for a further three held in the Large Room at Bridge Street and 'the Room below Balfour's Coffee House'. The latter was to become a favourite location for print auctions. *CM* 20/4/82.

<sup>122</sup> For a biography of Martin see Hugh Paton, *A Series of Original Portraits and Caricature etchings by the late John Kay, miniature painter in Edinburgh with Biographical sketches and anecdotes*, 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1842, pp.140-144. Martin was born c1744, at his first shop in Edinburgh in the High Street near the head of the West Bow, he combined the trades of cobbler and bookseller. A letter to his sister-in-law of 1782 demonstrates that he had by then moved to a shop in the Lawn market where he was 'in the bookselling way' and had met with success. In 1789 he purchased the large apartments he had rented in Gourlay's Land, Old Bank Close, and it was in one of these rooms that he held his auctions. He sold this property in 1793 and moved to 94, South Bridge. In 1806 he moved to No 2 Lothian Street, but retired a year or two later, he died in 1820. According to Paton, Martin was fond of his own jokes, and his grin was said to widen as bids for his prints rose. He was a highly successful auctioneer and member of the Cape Club.

<sup>123</sup> *CM* 25/1/83 & 20/12/83.

<sup>124</sup> *CM* 28/1/86 - old master prints at the auction rooms near the Clam-Shell turnpike, back of the guard, to be held on Monday 30 January and two following evenings. *CM* 6/5/86 - a choice and valuable collection of ancient and modern prints after the best masters, to be sold over four evenings at the auction room in



was established in rooms in Old Bank Close from where he advertised seven auctions of prints in close succession; one sale a month was advertised in January, March and August, and in May and June two. Martin was at this stage concerned primarily with promoting the quality of the prints - phrases such as 'the best masters Ancient and modern' recur throughout the promotions for his early sales; where possible he advertised the presence of 'proofs'.<sup>125</sup> The desire to differentiate his prints, to emphasize their quality and variety, continued into the 1790s when he advertised the availability of coloured prints for sale.<sup>126</sup> Martin was extremely successful. By July 1790 he was holding his auctions in an 'elegant new Sale room', and the numbers of auctions also increased, reaching a peak of fourteen in 1797.<sup>127</sup> This temporal peak in demand is coincident with that of the numbers of fine artists practicing in the city and is therefore indicative of a wider prosperity and interest in the arts.<sup>128</sup> However, the subsequent decline in the numbers of sales and fine artists is marked, and can most probably be explained by the onset of the Napoleonic Wars. In 1798 only one auction of modern prints was held, and Martin's sale room was let in February of 1800.<sup>129</sup>

The French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars brought a flood of art onto the London market, a trend reversed in Edinburgh where it also signalled the final stage in a decline in Dutch-Scottish contact begun in the 1780s. T.C. Smout has argued that the outbreak of the Fourth Dutch War in 1780, civil disturbance, French invasion in 1793 and the ensuing Napoleonic War strongly inhibited contact between the two nations for a

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Bridge Street. *CM* 20/5/86 - prints ancient and modern after the best masters including portraits, landscapes and seascapes. *CM* 2/12/86 - choice and valuable collection of prints, to be sold over six days at the large room Bridge Street.

<sup>125</sup> For example, 'best masters' and 'curious and valuable collection' are phrases used to promote a sale advertised *CM* 16/3/89. *CM* 18/5/89 - not only were the prints sold to be after the best masters 'Ancient and Modern', but 'many of them proofs'.

<sup>126</sup> For example *CM* 13/2/90 & 6/10/91.

<sup>127</sup> *CM* 5/7/90.

<sup>128</sup> See Table 1, Appendix A

<sup>129</sup> The sale room was let to the proprietors of a panorama, see below.

generation.<sup>130</sup> If it is accepted, as seems reasonable, that the old masters that formed such a high proportion of Edinburgh's print trade until the 1780s were largely imported from the Low Countries, then the change in Scotland's links with the Netherlands conceivably had a very significant effect on the print trade. As we noted, before the 1780s taste in Edinburgh prints was primarily for the works of old masters which were advertised much more frequently than modern British works. The subsequent growth in sales and auctions of modern works coincides with the decline in Scottish-Dutch contact. The decline in the fortunes of the auctioneer Smith, who specialized in high quality and presumably therefore old master prints, would also seem to coincide with this change in relations, and by 1798 the highly successful Martin, who had begun by advertising prints both ancient and modern, held but one sale comprised solely of modern prints. It would also appear that Martin changed his source of supply in the 1790s, which probably is also accounted for by the marked decline of trade with the Low Countries, as well as better and faster communications with London.

Martin's print enterprise, a business that developed and expanded over the late 1780s and 1790s, involved large-scale retailing in which prints were sold by auction rather than at a fixed price, and in which competition was a factor in the selling price. For much of this time Martin's advertisements emphasized rarity, uniqueness, quality and artistic reputation, thereby placing him in direct competition with print shops and booksellers. However, his advertisements also reveal him diversifying into paintings on a similarly commercial basis, and selling prints of a different character. In 1795 a distinct change in his advertising occurred. Assurances of quality or excellence disappeared from his promotional copy; the main selling point was now the fashionability of the prints. Prints were advertised as modern, they had 'just arrived

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<sup>130</sup> T.C. Smout 'Scottish-Dutch Contact 1600-1800', in Williams (1992), pp.21-32, p.30.

from Pall Mall, London' or had 'just arrived with the Mail Coach.'<sup>131</sup> Pall Mall was of course one of the most fashionable areas in London for the sale of prints and these prints were not, by implication, to be seen elsewhere in Edinburgh.<sup>132</sup> By buying from Martin print collectors were able to obtain the latest works which were, by implication of their origin, also the most fashionable, thus indicating a high level of cosmopolitan culture in the city.<sup>133</sup>

The citizens of Edinburgh could therefore purchase their prints from a variety of retailers. In addition to the conventional booksellers and print shops, the Circulating Library and auctioneers carried regular new stocks of a wide variety of prints. In the printed columns of the English provincial papers there is no evidence of comparable specialist print auctions, in which large quantities of prints were garnered for resale by the auctioneer, as was Martin's practise in Edinburgh.<sup>134</sup> Prints do appear in provincial auctions, included both amongst general household sales and private collections of works of art, but even these are rare except in Bath.<sup>135</sup> In Bath auction sales of prints and paintings appear to have been quite regular, although advertisements suggest that they were mainly sales of private collections. Bath was arguably an unusual city in respect of its supporting this kind of specialist market, an hypothesis given some support by the findings of Trevor Fawcett, who describes how in the 1780s paintings were brought from London to Bath with the specific intention of being auctioned in the fashionable spa town.<sup>136</sup> Obviously paintings were also sold in Edinburgh and the English provinces

<sup>131</sup> For example *CM* 19/3/95, 17/6/95, 9/1/96, 18/1/96, 12/1/97 & 24/6/97.

<sup>132</sup> For the importance of Pall Mall to the print trade see Clayton pp.209 & 218.

<sup>133</sup> The Napoleonic Wars seem to have halted Martin's success, in *CM* 10/2/00 Martin advertised that the sale room was to be let until Whitsunday, unfurnished, implying that the demand for print auctions had become seasonal.

<sup>134</sup> One exception is an advertisement placed in the *Newcastle Journal* of 12/4/00 in which an exhibition and sale of over one thousand engravings was announced.

<sup>135</sup> *IJ* 20/4/90. The rarity of specialist picture sales in these provincial towns may be explained by the necessity for large private collections to be sold in London or abroad in order to attract the highest prices. Pictures were also included in general house sales, which were not consulted in this survey.

<sup>136</sup> Fawcett (1998), p.11.

through the auction of private collections. Small numbers of paintings would undoubtedly have been sold in general house sales and it is only with large collections that specialist sales occur. However, as was the case with prints, the *Bath Journal* was the only provincial paper surveyed in which evidence of regular sales of paintings was found. In contrast, they appear very occasionally in the *Ipswich Journal*, the *Derby Mercury* and *Newcastle Courant*, and must therefore have been something of a novelty.<sup>137</sup>

The advertising and conduct of these auction sales followed a particular pattern. In both Edinburgh and Bath the name of the deceased collector was often given to accord the sale importance, and thus presumably to attract more buyers through the reputation of both the deceased and their collection. In addition to the collections of deceased gentlemen, Edinburgh's auction houses benefited from gentlemen going abroad and from the death of artists who had worked in the city. However, advertisements rarely give clues to the modern reader as to what pictures these collections contained. Their status as 'a curious and valuable collection' or one of 'a gentleman of taste' was all that was given to whet the appetite of the eighteenth-century newspaper reader.<sup>138</sup> In Edinburgh, the numbers of auctions devoted to paintings do not appear to have increased dramatically as those for prints did. Their advertised numbers rarely rose above one or two a year, either there or in Bath; relative to prints, paintings were expensive, and the market probably could not support more.

<sup>137</sup> *IJ* 20/4/90, *DM* 4/9/80 & *NJ* 24/5/60.

<sup>138</sup> Some evidence of the variety and standard of collections of paintings in Edinburgh in this period can be found in Syllas Neville's diary (the published version does not print this passage taken from 'EUL. MIC. M. 29, 'Part Diary of Syllas Neville, covering his stay in Edinburgh, 1771-76, also 1780'), Neville visited the home of Messrs Alexanders on Tuesday 8 December 1772. He recorded in his diary that 'They have a pretty tolerable collection of pictures, among wh[sic] are two small pieces of horses, Ve, by Cuyp very fine; a mare 7 stallion by stubbs..[...].more particularly delicate; two good pieces by Ostade; Judas returning...[...]; 7 christ with the woman taken in adultery, Two admirable pictures by Rembrandt (in his best manner) & L.Giordans[?] (the woman in the last picture is particularly fine); a portrait of De la Tour by himself, admirably ..[?] & thought the most capital picture of the collection.' Neville continues to detail prints, works on copper as well as other paintings.

Paintings were also sold by means other than auctions, primarily through sales or commissions contracted directly between artist and patron, but other less common methods were also used. Hogarth's use of lotteries in the sale and publicity of his work has been well documented, and the Edinburgh-based artist William Delacour also used unconventional methods to sell paintings to the public. In December 1764 it was announced in the *Caledonian Mercury* that six of Mr Delacour's paintings would be disposed of 'in chances', by the throw of dice.<sup>139</sup> Long and complex conditions were laid out for subscribers to the scheme. In essence, however, tickets cost half a guinea, as many as desired could be purchased, with each entitling the bearer to one throw. In a later advertisement the date of the 'game of chance' was announced as the 21 January 1765.<sup>140</sup> The pictures were to be disposed of in six chances, by throw of the dice. It was explained that the highest number or chance to be entitled to the picture of greatest value and so on for the rest.

This type of publicity was not aimed just at disposing of these six particular paintings but in promoting Delacour's paintings in general, as we discover when we learn that the pictures concerned were also exhibited from 12 December until the competition a month later, and further that this game of chance was advertised on at least six occasions within that month. Delacour's unusual choice of sales method and his use of newspaper advertising, as opposed to a more polite announcement, are examples of overt commercial practices. His lack of inhibition in using the press is further evidenced in his publicity for an exhibition of drawings he had just completed. 'Mr Delacour begs leave to inform the public that he has just now finished, and may be seen at his house, head of Toddrick's wynd, any day, after five o'clock A Collection of Drawings.'<sup>141</sup> The

<sup>139</sup> CM 8/12/64 and also 22/12/64 & 29/12/64.

<sup>140</sup> CM 5/1/65, 12/1/65 & 19/1/65.

<sup>141</sup> CM 5/7/66.

collection was described as comprising watercolours, inks and chalks, and a range of prices was given. Such commercial self-publicity by a fine artist, was, as has already been suggested, extremely unusual.

Advertisements publicizing exhibitions, which were in fact a forum for the sale of pictures, recur in the Edinburgh press from the mid-1760s. Today we differentiate exhibitions for viewing, pleasure and education from those used to sell pictures, but in the eighteenth century concerned artists, audiences or entrepreneurs did not.<sup>142</sup> Some have maintained that exhibitions other than those organized by artists and interested amateurs (which they also argue occurred but rarely outside of London) cannot be considered as exhibitions.<sup>143</sup> It will be demonstrated here through numerous examples that, although exhibitions were promoted as places of leisure, and to some degree, places in which the education of taste could be promoted, these values were not regarded as incompatible with the commercial *raison d'être* of these public exhibitions.

In many cases no distinction was made between exhibitions and sales of paintings.<sup>144</sup> Paintings were exhibited over a number of weeks and an admission charged for entry, and the pictures then auctioned or sold at fixed prices. These exhibitions were not in general organized by the auctioneers and art salesmen based permanently in the city. Provincial exhibitions were generally held on a touring basis, and in some senses

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<sup>142</sup> Andrew Hemingway discusses art exhibitions and commercialism in 'Art Exhibitions as Leisure-Class Rituals in early Nineteenth-Century London' in Brian Allen (ed.), *Towards a Modern Art World*, New Haven & London, 1995, pp.95-108.

<sup>143</sup> For example see Brewer (1997), pp.201-251.

<sup>144</sup> J. S. Copley used the commercial public exhibition of a number of his major works (*The Death of the Earl of Chatham* and *The Siege of Gibraltar*) together with the sale of prints after them in order to profit from prestigious, if not usually commercially viable, large scale history paintings. For Copley's exhibitions see Emily Ballew Neff, *John Singleton Copley in England*, London, 1995, pp.38-42. Print exhibitions were advertised comparatively rarely, an example is the monthly exhibition of prints advertised by J. Sibbald (one time owner of the circulating library and prominent print dealer in the Edinburgh newspaper columns), *CM* 9/5/81. The prints to be exhibited were after a collection of one hundred paintings in Lord Orford's collection, a set of David Allan's *Carnivals* and *Watson and The Shark* after Copley, and amongst others, etchings by Kauffman, Martin, Cipriani and Bartolozzi.

can be compared with the itinerant artists who spent a short period in successive towns, profiting often by their novelty value or lack of resident competition.

Recognition that the popular art market in Edinburgh was extremely vibrant probably attracted exhibitors, advertisements for whom first appeared during the late 1780s. In December of 1788 Mr J. Williamson from London began to advertise paintings and prints for sale. The pictures could be seen until the 20 December and admission to the room was to be one shilling, and therefore relatively expensive and exclusive. Although in it is only in Williamson's final advertisement that he refers to this as an 'exhibition' of pictures, he is clearly attempting to raise the sale's status above that of a simple commercial activity. His copy encouraged ladies 'to improve their taste' by attending the exhibition and continued by describing the pictures as 'worthy of the attention of the connoisseur.'<sup>145</sup> H. Farquharson (carver, gilder and print seller) also sought to emphasize the polite as opposed to commercial aspects of the exhibition sales he held in the city in early 1794. Under the banner of 'The Fine Arts', Farquharson promoted the exhibition and sale of a 'Large and Valuable' collection of paintings, prints and drawings, which he had lately purchased at great expense. He further pressed his appeal to polite society through association with one of the city's most eminent painters - the exhibition would be held in the Exhibition Room of West Register House, 'lately possessed by Mr Naesmith [sic], painter.'<sup>146</sup> This final statement would also seem to imply that Alexander Naysmith had exhibited works in this room, perhaps his own or, like Farquharson, as a dealer in paintings.<sup>147</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Williamson's advertisements appear closely spaced - *CM* 1/12/88, 13/12/88 & 20/12/88.

<sup>146</sup> Farquharson's first advertisement appeared in the *CM* 18/1/94, on 6 March he advertised a second exhibition and on the 10th added that the exhibition contained a very fine portrait of the late King and Queen of France. On 20 March he informed the 'Amateurs of Painting and the Fine Arts' that they had the opportunity of 'gratifying their taste' at his exhibition. In May (*CM* 8/5/94) the collection was sold by auction.

<sup>147</sup> It was common for artists to also act as dealers, see Lippincott (1983), pp.98-118.

The relationship between polite display and commercial sales had become more equitable by 1791, when, 'Capital Paintings' by the Best Masters were advertised as 'now on Exhibition and Sale.' The paintings were said to have been selected by eminent artists in London and the public was guaranteed no fictitious names or titles. Catalogues were expensive, at six shillings, and the exhibition was open every day from ten until four.<sup>148</sup> During Edinburgh's race week of 1792 the first ever exhibition (according to the promoters) of political and satirical caricatures was attempted in the city. The roles of caricatures as providing a 'just view' of the political situation across Europe and in revealing the foibles and follies of fashion were emphasized, as was the decorum and propriety of the prints; visitors being reassured that they would not give offence to a delicate eye.<sup>149</sup> The coincidence with race week recurred in July 1800, with the arrival of an exhibition of paintings. The collection of paintings by the late Mr Elmer RA, a painter of animals, living and dead, game and fish, would have appealed strongly to members of racing society. It was an appeal made explicit in numerous advertisements, in which the collection was promoted as a 'sportsman's exhibition.'<sup>150</sup> Previously exhibited in London it was open from eleven until four every day.<sup>151</sup> It is probable that other exhibitions were held to coincide with the holiday atmosphere of race week.

The coincidence of exhibitions with public leisure is also witnessed in East Anglia in 1755, when the *Ipswich Journal* carried two advertisements for an exhibition of marble sculpture; the first proclaimed its imminent arrival in Bury St Edmunds and the second its presence in Colchester 'during the time of the Fair.'<sup>152</sup> The coincidence

<sup>148</sup> CM 5/2/91.

<sup>149</sup> CM 23/7/92.

<sup>150</sup> Probably Stephen Elmer ARA (1714 or 1717-1796). CM 19/7/00, 24/7/00, 26/7/00 & 31/7/00.

<sup>151</sup> Exhibitions and auction views were not open on a Sunday, the term 'daily' was used with the understanding that the Sabbath was excluded.

<sup>152</sup> *IJ* 4/10/55 & 25/10/55. The exhibition consisted of 'Mr Motet's six inimitable Pieces of Marble Sculpture.' they represented the life of Christ, with over four hundred figures in relieve.



of exhibitions with other, more traditional, forms of entertainment would have been a likely factor in determining visits of touring exhibitions to a town.

There is no evidence of sale orientated exhibitions in Derby or Ipswich, but the *Newcastle Courant* carried a long advertisement for an exhibition and sale by auction of over one thousand engravings in 1800.<sup>153</sup> In Bath, such sales-cum-exhibitions are evident in the newspaper columns from the 1790s.<sup>154</sup> Advertisements were placed during 1791 for the 'Picture Gallery', a significant name in itself, in which a 'Curious and Valuable Assemblage of Pictures and Drawings, will be Exhibited everyday (Sundays excepted), from Ten in the Morning till four in the Afternoon.' Admission tickets could be bought at the gallery or libraries, entry was 1s 6d including a descriptive catalogue, or an annual entrance ticket could be purchased for five shillings. Over one hundred and seventy pictures were on show, of which a number was to be sold. It was further claimed that a number of the pictures had not been exhibited before and that the artists represented included Guido, Caravaggio, Claude Lorraine, Janssens, 'Bergham', Rembrandt, Ruysdael and Gainsborough.<sup>155</sup>

Public exhibitions were not the only means the public had of viewing the fine arts. Auctions were always preceded by public viewings and advertisements placed by many miniature painters invariably advised the public of where specimens of their work might be seen (often at their lodgings or in bookshops), while proposals to publish prints by subscription often informed the reader where the painting after which the print was to be engraved was on public view; often in a shop. Paintings were also on view in the studios of fine artists, and a number of artists in the provinces did hold and publicize exhibitions of their work. In Edinburgh, William Delacour held an exhibition of his

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<sup>153</sup> NC 12/4/00.

<sup>154</sup> From the small sample studied here it is not evident that these exhibition/sales were coincident with particular periods of the year. The examples found here were dated in March, April, September, October and November.

recent drawings in 1766 and in 1791 Mr Percy, a modeller in wax from London, exhibited one hundred characters ancient and modern; the latter's advertising copy was careful to assert that he was not an itinerant artist.<sup>156</sup> In 1794 Mr Walker, the drawing master, was in possession of a collection of Italian landscapes by Jacob More, which could be viewed by appointment.<sup>157</sup> In 1786 Mr Williams, a portrait and landscape painter, exhibited history, landscape and portraits at his home in Bath, for which he charged one shilling admittance. Although it is not clear whether all the works on show were by this artist, it seems unlikely. An auction during December of the same year described the paintings as 'All the Valuable stock of Paintings, belonging to Mr Williams, Landscape and Portrait Painter', the use of the word 'stock' would seem to indicate that Williams was also a dealer.<sup>158</sup>

The exhibition of pictures should be considered within the context of the growing interest in public exhibitions of all kinds that was developing during the later eighteenth century.<sup>159</sup> These displays were closely tied to the idea of spectacle. The Royal Academy exhibitions were themselves transformed into 'spectacles' by the very presence of visitors who became part of the exhibition, a point made by Charles Brandoin in *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Painting in the Year 1771* and Thomas Rowlandson in his print *Exhibition Stare-Case* of 1800. Transparencies, which adorned pleasure gardens, also acted as a form of stage setting, helping to transform urban parks into fantastical settings, spectacles for sociable encounters. These spectacular exhibitions appear to have involved performance, and a different type of engagement between

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<sup>155</sup> BJ 26/9/91, 10/10/91, 24/10/91, 7/11/91, 21/11/91, 5/12/91 & 19/12/91.

<sup>156</sup> CM 5/7/66 & 4/4/91.

<sup>157</sup> CM 22/3/94.

<sup>158</sup> BJ 23/10/86 & 11/12/86.

<sup>159</sup> Malcolm Baker discusses the vast array of exhibitions held in London during the later eighteenth century in 'A Rage for Exhibitions', Hilary Young (ed.), *The Genius of Wedgwood*, EC, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1993, pp.118-127.

image, artist and spectator than that normally found within the boundaries of polite detachment and virtuous appreciation.

The search for a novel method and fame may have motivated Mrs Collin's decision to draw members of an Edinburgh theatre's audience from the stage. But by doing so she was entering into as public a performance as the actors on stage.<sup>160</sup> Undoubtedly this would have been carried out with well-rehearsed bravado, as its execution was designed to impress not only those who had requested to be drawn at this event, but also the remainder of the audience, and in turn those to whom an account would have been passed the following day. Art and theatre also combined in an 'Evening Comic Exhibition' advertised in Edinburgh in 1783.<sup>161</sup> This spectacle consisted of transparencies and other paintings, and original sketches from *The Folly of the Times*. An explanation of each image was to be given by an artist, but most of the words and 'physical parts' were written by Geo[rge] Alexander Stevens 'Master of Mirth.' The role of Stevens would seem to suggest an element of performance as integral to the evening's entertainment. As a charitable event its appeal must have been directed at the wealthier citizens of Edinburgh.

The first showing of Robert Barker's (1739-1806) panorama in 1788 and the arrival of Phillipe Jacques de Louthembourg's (1740-1812) Eidophusikon in 1789 provided Edinburgh with further spectacular integration of art and theatre. Barker described his Panorama of Edinburgh as a 'true representation of the city of Edinburgh, and its environs as they appear to a person turning quite round on the observatory top on the Calton-hill, to the fullest extent of the horizon.' But 'this, and every other description which can be given, is inadequate to impress a just idea of the performance, which, from the entire novelty of the thought is not to be perfectly understood until

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<sup>160</sup> CM 1/5/84.

seen.' However, Barker's pictorial novelty went beyond that claimed or sought by painters in miniature. The panorama was invention and Edinburgh was, as he boasted to the readers of the Caledonian Mercury 'the first Subject of this Idea, which has emancipated the sublime art of Painting from an erroneous received opinion and restraint it ever before laboured under.'<sup>162</sup> Open from ten in the morning until nine at night with admission charged at two shillings, it was far more expensive than other exhibitions. Barker first showed his invention at the fashionable New Assembly Rooms in Edinburgh, but as he makes clear in his advertisement he intended it to be seen in London and on the Continent, as indeed it later was.<sup>163</sup>

This raises the question of cultural acceptance. For although Barker's invention points to an innovative Scottish culture, that far from simply emulating London trends and fashions actually initiated and sent ideas southward, the desire to convey the panorama's physical and by implication cultural progress to Scottish readers implies the perceived need to invoke London and the Continent to impress and attract viewers. However, in the panorama it is possible to witness in provincial culture an inventiveness and innovation demonstrating it to be in no way subservient to metropolitan. In 1796, a "Grand and Improved" panorama was opened in a large, temporary building purpose built for the show, and situated opposite New College. The impressive dimensions of the panorama were advertised as 2464 square feet of oil on canvas, and represented *The Burning of His Majesty's Ship the Boyne* by Mr Dodd. Visitors were warned early in the following year that the best conditions for viewing the panorama were a clear, but not

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<sup>161</sup> CM, 22/11/83, 24/11/83 & 26/12/83.

<sup>162</sup> CM 20/3/88.

<sup>163</sup> For the panorama see Ralph Hyde, *Gilded Scenes and Shining Prospects. Panoramic Views of British Towns 1575-1900*, New Haven, 1985, which places the panorama within the tradition of the town prospect, also Ralph Hyde *Panoromania! The Art and Entertainment of the 'All-Embracing' View*, London, 1988 and Richard Altick, *The Shows of London*, London, 1978, pp.128-40.

too bright, day. In March, following the donation of entry charges to charity, the exhibition moved on to Glasgow.<sup>164</sup>

However Edinburgh was not long without such entertainment, for in July of the same year a "Grand Panorama of London" opened in the temporary building vacated by Mr Dodd's display. Mr Parker was the proprietor and the view of London and its environs was painted by Mr Naesmith [sic] and Mr Coupar, which suggests that the enterprise was a local one.<sup>165</sup> It too went on to Glasgow and England.<sup>166</sup> In 1800 this same panorama appears to have returned to Edinburgh, but this time it faced competition from another advertised with an added attraction - 'with motion.'<sup>167</sup> This latter panorama was displayed from March in Martin's 'Large Auction room' (which had been offered for let a month earlier) and its subjects were recent events in the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>168</sup> The first 'Grand display of England's Glory' was *The Battle of the Nile*, in which the two fleets could be seen from commencement to termination of engagement in motion, and was 'as large as real.'<sup>169</sup> Later, in May, spectators could marvel at *Lord Duncan's Victory over the Dutch Fleet*.<sup>170</sup> These subjects were highly patriotic as the battles depicted were vital naval victories, securing Britain's naval predominance in the Mediterranean.<sup>171</sup>

The year 1790 witnessed the sustained advertising of an exhibition comprising Mr Jervais's transparent enamelled paintings on glass and transparent paintings by De Louthembourg (his Eidophusikon). Chief scene designer at Drury Lane, De

<sup>164</sup> CM 15/12/96, 22/12/96, 24/12/96, 12/1/97, 16/1/97, 11/2/97, 15/2/97, 20/2/97, 25/2/97 & 27/3/97.

<sup>165</sup> CM 8/7/97 & 10/7/97. Alexander Nasmyth was one of the most prominent landscape painters in Edinburgh at this time.

<sup>166</sup> CM 19/8/97 & 26/8/97.

<sup>167</sup> CM 8/3/00, as in 1797, this was a grand panorama of London. The artists are undoubtedly Nasmyth and Cooper. The first of many advertisement for the Panorama with motion appeared in CM 22/3/00.

<sup>168</sup> Martin's sale room was advertised to let, CM 10/2/00.

<sup>169</sup> CM 28/4/00.

<sup>170</sup> CM 8/5/00.

Loutherbourg was well known for his innovative theatrical designs, and this invention shared the sense of theatricality that he was renowned for creating. The exhibition was to 'conclude with a display of the extraordinary Optical Properties of "The Royal Accurate Delineator."' <sup>172</sup> The admission price was the same as for the panoramas, one shilling. Jervais and De Loutherbourg continued to advertise together and offered new incentives for repeat visits. In February 1790 Jervais announced that on the 13th of that month several of the pieces of glass would be replaced by some 'New effects', several of which would be optical. De Loutherbourg in turn offered subscription tickets at one guinea, which entitled the purchaser not only to seven admission tickets but also three engravings by Heath. <sup>173</sup> But in March De Loutherbourg and Jervais were exhibiting and advertising separately; no explanation for this change was given. De Loutherbourg's Eidophusikon was shown in the evenings at Mr Gilchrist's in Hunter's Square and was billed as 'Representing the most interesting phenomena of nature, in a series of moving pictures.' <sup>174</sup> De Loutherbourg also introduced music into the evening, with ladies and gentlemen being entertained in the interval by airs played by a military band. <sup>175</sup>

The many advertisements placed in the *Caledonian Mercury* thus reveal the diversity and vibrancy of the art market in Edinburgh during the later eighteenth century. From the many hundreds of newspaper advertisements it is possible to gauge many changes in fortune, popularity, and fashions. These advertisements reveal in overall terms the relative significance of Edinburgh's art market in comparison with those of

<sup>171</sup> The battles referred to are the Battle of Camperdown (October 1797), in which Duncan obliterated the Dutch navy, and the Battle of the Nile (August 1798) in which Nelson destroyed the French fleet that had carried Bonaparte to Egypt.

<sup>172</sup> *CM* 30/11/89. For De Loutherbourg's Eidophusikon see Altick, pp.117-172. It was first exhibited at De Loutherbourg's London home in February 1781. The scenes presented were named in a press report, and correspond with those advertised in Edinburgh. A water colour by Edward Francis Burney (illustrated Altick, p.122) gives a visual description of the new spectacular.

<sup>173</sup> *CM* 6/2/90 & 13/2/90.

<sup>174</sup> *CM* 8/3/90. Invented and painted by De Loutherbourg, the subjects were listed as *Aurora*, *A Sunset*, *A Storm and Shipwreck*, *A View in the Mediterranean with fire and moonlight* and *Satan arranging his troops at banks of firey lake*.

other provincial cities, a point exemplified by the vibrant re-sale trade in prints and paintings advertised there. From the selling points stressed in these same advertisements, the tastes to which these traders appealed, and the changes in these over time, it is also possible to detect cultural changes in terms of trade and taste, with the development of an increasingly important relationship between the art markets of Edinburgh and London as well as alterations in Continental links. Significant shifts in taste are witnessed in the increasing interest in subject matter that expressed local values and interests, but also a parallel development in the popularity of subjects that were modern and reached out to a socially broad consumer society and a geographically broad base that was British, and were therefore national in appeal.

In the market for prints, there was a clear and sustained increase in sales until the last years of the century, when a marked down turn is evident due to the effects of the Napoleonic Wars. But more interestingly there appears to have been a distinct alteration in the taste of the citizens of Edinburgh, perhaps born out of the necessity of availability. In the 1790s modern subjects, which had been largely ignored in favour of old masters, became the most commercially important prints for the city's print dealers, a development which followed a steep decline in trade links with the Low Countries. In conjunction with this new predilection for the modern came an increase in the connections claimed by advertisers between their goods and London.

This distinctive shift towards London fashions indicates a development in Edinburgh's earlier relationship with the metropolis, and with the Continent. In general Edinburgh's art market appears to have been less reliant upon London than the other provincial towns considered in this study. This is apparent in subject matter, production and sales. From the evidence of these advertisements, English provincial towns were

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<sup>175</sup> *CM* 13/3/90. This advertisement was repeated at least weekly until 10/4/90.

almost wholly reliant upon London distributors to provide prints for sale through local booksellers and specialist print shops. Although within these provincial towns some small print production occurred and prints after local subject matter were produced, it was on a far more limited scale than in Edinburgh, where print making flourished and local subject matter, in terms of portraits, landscapes and historical subjects, proved popular.<sup>176</sup>

The relative importance of London, to Edinburgh and to other provincial towns, may be discussed within the context of the local and national strands in middle class culture, detailed earlier. Although London, as the centre and distributor of national culture, was vital to the middling sorts who purchased prints throughout Britain (and the Continent), it was the balance at a local level of this relation between London based national culture and local culture that is of relevance here. It would appear that local cultural sources were able to flourish to a greater extent under the consumers of the Edinburgh print trade than was possible in many provincial English towns. This implies that a distinctively Scottish print culture continued to thrive in the later eighteenth century, alongside imports from the Continent and London. The market for prints in Edinburgh was not only strong, but also rich and diverse.

It is evident that British provincial culture was also a national culture. This was manifest in the movements of itinerant and visiting artists, the presence of travelling exhibitions, and the growing importance of written texts and prints to the transmission of theories and fashions. Strong lines of artistic communication existed amongst Britain's provincial towns, and between them and her capital, which served to transmit a visual culture that was national in its character. To see this as simply emulation of London is

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<sup>176</sup> One area where Edinburgh did not prove productive was in the printing of satirical and political prints, with the exception of David Allan, some of whose works are clearly inspired by Hogarth. An engraving entitled variously *The Stool of Repentance*, *The Black Stool* and *Presbyterian Penance* (1784) is derived in visual terms from Hogarth's *Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism. A Medley* (1762).



misleading. The pictures, prints and exhibitions that were offered across the nation had to serve not one provincial community but many. The same prints were advertised in Liverpool, Newcastle and Ipswich, albeit by London artists, and itinerant artists did not have the time, nor did their mechanical productions offer the scope, to adapt to local taste as they travelled from town to town and city to city. It was therefore essential that their appeal was not confined to the tastes of prospering ship owners in Liverpool, or manufacturers in Derby, or Edinburgh advocates – their work had to have as broad appeal to the middling sorts as possible, if they were to be successful. This would also seem to preclude too great an adherence to the highly fashionable tastes of London, although the leading role taken by London must be acknowledged, as for example in the metropolitan cultural imperatives that inspired the small number of artistic institutions established in the provinces in the later eighteenth century. Even so, local imperatives appear to have played a very important role. In Liverpool the domination of the city by commercial interests affected that city's art institutions, whilst in Edinburgh the Scottish national interest in Improvement motivated the establishment of her academy of art.

Edinburgh's art market fits within a fairly uniform construct of paintings and prints, auctions and exhibitions, fine and decorative artists, and itinerant and resident artists. It is a structure witnessed across the entirety of provincial towns and cities discussed, with some local variations. In Norwich for example, there was a smaller ratio of permanent artists to visiting artists than was found elsewhere, while Bath also displayed an unusual richness due to her particular status within London society. However, it seems clear from the commercial aspects of the Edinburgh art market and in the number of fine artists resident in the city, that the market for art in Edinburgh was considerably larger than that in other provincial cities, with the possible exception of Bath. Further, there appear to be significant difference in the types of works produced

by fine artists in Edinburgh, in comparison with these other cities. As one would expect in the eighteenth century, portraiture was the most financially rewarding genre, yet the creation of history paintings, etchings, and engravings at a local level marks Edinburgh's visual culture as distinctive. Landscape painting also appears to have flourished on a larger scale than in the English provincial towns considered. The art market in eighteenth-century Edinburgh was therefore distinguished in both its diversity and prosperity.

## Chapter Six

### Conclusion

The aims of this dissertation were twofold: to investigate if, and how, national identities were manifest in eighteenth-century Scottish art, and to place this art within a British art history. By acknowledging the cultural as well as political basis of national identity, the manifestation of national identity in Scottish art was considered in a broad ranging and innovative manner that examined the question variously through a long-time symbol of Scottish national identity and through two of the most significant subjects of debate in eighteenth-century Scotland - economics and aesthetics.

In approaching the question of national identity it was essential to locate Scottish art within a British art history. If the history of Scottish art were treated outside this context, it would be extremely problematic to consider one of the most important identities in eighteenth-century Scotland, North Britishness. An examination of published research revealed Scottish art as integral to a history of British art, while new research presented here has reinforced this conclusion, though identifying subtle variations.

An enduring symbol of Scottish national identity, Highland portraits were reassessed through their appropriate historical and cultural contexts, revealing their previously overlooked variety. Concluding that generally these portraits should be regarded as part of the tradition of European aristocratic portraiture, their position as symbols of national identity was questioned. The most distinctive aspect of these paintings, Highland dress, was seen to be significant not for its uniformity as a national costume, but for its variety, a variety that had an important impact on the interpretation of these images. Further, while this dress was of particular import in their interpretation, the more usual art historical

concerns of setting, both pictorial and physical, impacted on the paintings' exposition in very significant ways. However, in relation to the question of national identity, it was the cultural perspective of the viewer that was of greatest interest here. For while the Highlander symbolised Scotland to the English at this date, in Scotland the Highlands were regarded as having a distinct culture, and the symbolic significance of the Highlands in and for the Highlander was quite different. This research uniquely looked at the possible motivation of Highlanders in sitting for these portraits and their significance in the context of the Highlands, thus adding to the work of Peter Womack on the myth of the Highlands. This 'internal' view led to the conclusion that, excluding those which are unquestionably military, identities other than national were at play in these portraits, that they were important political statements relating to the sitters' changing role in the Highlands and the public perception of that change.

Given the difficulties of symbolic representations of nation identity encountered in Highland portraits, the question of how it might be manifest in portraiture was considered. Contributing to the debate on grangerized portraits, the question of whether a portrait of an individual could contain or represent the idea of nationhood was addressed, and the possibility conceded. In order to develop this argument along a specific and pertinent line of inquiry, attention was given to whether particular aesthetic qualities in portraiture might in fact be a manifestation of national identity. Relating Allan Ramsay's very distinctive change in style of the 1750s to the cultural, social and intellectual milieu of eighteenth-century Edinburgh and to Ramsay's own aesthetic treatise, an aesthetic was identified that arguably was of particular pertinence to Scotland. While this type of social portraiture has in the past been identified with Scottish art, it has not previously been so clearly specified in terms of origin or aesthetic qualities, or national significance.

While the continued relevance of Scottish national identity was accepted, the final chapters of this dissertation questioned Scotland's position as a nation after the Union, engaging in the debates surrounding her possible provincial status. Research into the economy of the fine and popular art markets in Edinburgh, and in comparison with a number of English provincial towns, has made a contribution to our knowledge of provincial visual culture, an area long overlooked, even in recent historical research into urban culture. Disparate secondary literature and a survey of newspaper advertisements combined to reveal the tastes and habits of consumers, how art was sold, and to whom, and where and how displayed and exhibited. This in turn has added to our understanding of how broadly exhibition and display might have been defined in the eighteenth century, and demonstrated the interaction between light, theatre, music and art. Further, the survey of art advertising has added to the pioneering work of Louise Lippincott in assessing the use by artists of commercial advertising, and more broadly to our understanding of the role of provincial newspapers in the eighteenth century. In general this research has supported the growing questioning by scholars of the assumption that provincial culture simply emulated the metropolis. In relation to national identity it was concluded that, in terms of the art market, Scotland retained to a certain extent a separate and distinctive economy in the 1750s, although not to the exclusion of London or itinerant artists, but that increasingly this distinctiveness was overtaken and replaced by one that was British, and London-centric.

Throughout this dissertation it has been argued that British identity was a significant force in shaping eighteenth-century Scotland's economy and culture; that a desire for an equal Union with England motivated artistic institutions and impacted upon the art economy. Further, it must be acknowledged that what has been considered here is the Scottish reaction to Britishness, in the form of North Britishness; the English response to the

idea of Britishness in art was not considered and will undoubtedly have been quite distinct. However, the impact of British national identity on art must be set against the continued importance of an existing artistic establishment in Scotland. Links to the Continent and a history of patronage of both foreign and local artists were established well before the Union, and while the Union had an important impact on the commercial art market which had previously held little interest in England, it is also true that a sense of Scottish national production remained. In the painting of Scottish subject matter of course, but also in the founding of art-related institutions which, though evidently inspired by earlier and international examples, were also subject to specifically Scottish ideals and motivations. This dialectic of Britishness and Scottishness is also expressed in Allan Ramsay's portraiture, for although his aesthetic treatise and second style of portraiture were strongly influenced by the values of Edinburgh's society and the social theory of the Scottish Enlightenment, his work cannot be divorced from the influence of a European tradition of portraiture and the London society within which he mainly worked.

While this dissertation has been concerned to discuss what and how national identities were manifest in eighteenth-century Scottish art, many further questions remain to be asked and answered. It has only been possible here to examine whether national identity was manifest through the artistic economy and aesthetics. Both collecting and patronage were also considered briefly, the two case studies pertaining to the Earl of Buchan and the Dalrymple family demonstrate the scope for further research in this area. However, it has not been possible to discuss whether Scottish art expresses any challenge to British identity, nor whether there was hostility towards Englishness in Scotland, as there evidently was in England towards Scottishness. This last point may, however, be addressed to some extent, for it is evident that if hostility did exist it was not manifest in the same way as it was in

England, through satirical and political prints. Despite an extensive search, it was not possible to identify any political or satirical prints produced in eighteenth-century Scotland aimed at disparaging either English or British national identity. Political and satirical prints were, as far as can be assessed, not produced in Scotland at this date, despite such potential motivations as English reaction to Lord Bute, or the exclusion of Scotland from providing a militia.<sup>1</sup> Within the limitations of this dissertation it has not been possible to consider history painting, another potential medium for expressing political or cultural discontentment. Finally, whilst the idea of national stereotypes was touched upon, there remains considerable scope for further comparative research in this area.

In conclusion, through considering the cultural, rather than political, basis of national identity it was possible to reveal the presence of both British and Scottish national identities as manifest in eighteenth-century Scottish art. This approach utilised considerable new historical evidence, that also serves to further our understanding of British art, and promotes a definition of it that is broad based and which attempts to move beyond the metropolitan orientation of the discipline.

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<sup>1</sup> The work of David Allan perhaps comes closest to this description for a Scottish artist, but his output, while often highly influenced by Hogarth, was concerned with satirizing Scottish institutions such as the Kirk.

	1750	1751	1752	1753	1754	1755	1756	1757	1758	1759	1760	1761	1762	1763	1764	1765	1766
Alexander, John	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H
Allan, David																	
Brown, John																	
Chalmers, George																	
Delacour, William																	
Lewis, Charles																	
Martin, David																	
Millar, William																	
More, Jacob																	
Mosman, William																	
Nasmyth, Alexander																	
Nixon, James																	
Norie, James snr																	
Raeburn, Henry																	
Ramsay, Allan																	
Robertson, Archibald																	
Runciman, Alexander																	
Walker, George																	
Watson, George																	
Watts, George																	
Williams, Hugh William																	
Cummins, James																	
Cummins																	
Danloux, Henri Pierre																	
Forbes, Anne																	
Frederick, Robert																	
Graham, John																	
Mercer, Philip																	
Norie, Robert																	
Pavillon, Charles																	
Sandby, Paul																	
Scot, John Thomas																	
Skirving, Archibald																	
Stewart, Anthony																	
Weir, Walter																	
H=history																	
L=landscape																	
M=Miniature																	
T=teacher																	
S=subject pictures																	
P=Portrait																	
PP=pastels																	
t=Theatre																	
Q=Still life																	

Table 1 Fine Artists in Edinburgh 1750-1800



	1767	1768	1769	1770	1771	1772	1773	1774	1775	1776	1777	1778	1779	1780	1781	1782
Alexander, John																
Allan, David														H.S.P.	H.S.P.	
Brown, John														H.S.P.	M	M
Chalmers, George	P	P	P	P	P	P	P									
Cunning, James	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Cummings																
Dantoux, Henri Pierre																
Delacour, William	L.T															
Forbes, Anne						P	P	P								
Graham, John																
Lewis, Charles																
Martin, David																
Mercier, Philip																
Miller, William	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
More, Jacob	L	L	L	L												
Mosman, William																
Nasmyth, Alexander																
Nixon, James																
Norie, James sr																
Norie, Robert																
Pavilion, Charles				H	H											
Raeburn, Henry																
Ramsay, Allan																
Robert, Freebairn																
Robertson, Archibald																
Runciman, Alexander																
Sandby, Paul																
Seton, John Thomas																
Skirving, Archibald																
Stewart, Anthony																
Walker, George																
Watson, George																
Watts, George																
Weir, Walter																
Williams, Hugh William																
H=history																
L=landscape																
M=miniature																
T=teacher																
S=subject pictures																
P=portraiture																
PP=panels																
te=Theatre																
Q=Still life																

Table 1 Fine Artists in Edinburgh, 1750-1800.

	1783	1784	1785	1786	1787	1788	1789	1790	1791	1792	1793	1794	1795	1796	1797	1798	1799	1800
Alexander, John																		
Allan, David	H.S.P.	H.S.P.	H.S.P.	H.S.P.	H.S.P.	H.S.P.	H.S.P.	H.S.P.	H.S.P.	H.S.P.	H.S.P.	H.S.P.	H.S.P.					
Brown, John	M	M	M	M														
Chalmers, George																		
Cunning, James	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L								
Cummins																		
Danloux, Henri Pierre																		
Delacour, William																		
Forbes, Anne																		
Graham, John																		
Lewis, Charles																		
Martin, David	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Mercier, Philip																		
Miller, William	P	P																
More, Jacob																		
Mossman, William																		
Nasmith, Alexander																		
Nixon, James																		
Norie, James sr																		
Norie, Robert																		
Pavilion, Charles																		
Rachburn, Henry																		
Ramsay, Allan	M.P.	M.P.																
Robert, Erasmus																		
Robertson, Archibald																		
Ruximin, Alexander	L.H.T.	L.H.T.	L.H.T.															
Sandys, Paul																		
Seaton, John Thomas																		
Skirving, Archibald																		
Sewart, Anthony																		
Walker, George																		
Watson, George																		
Watt, George																		
Weir, Walter	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G
Williams, Hugh William																		
G-gene																		
H-Hudson																		
L-landscape																		
M-Minature																		
T-teacher																		
S-subject pictures																		
P-Portraiture																		
PP-powels																		
te-Theatre																		
Q-Still life																		

Table 1. Fine Artists in Edinburgh, 1750-1800.

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